

**Cornell University Library**  
Ithaca, New York

---

**THE JAMES VERNER SCAIFE  
COLLECTION  
CIVIL WAR LITERATURE**

---

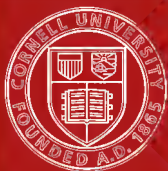
THE GIFT OF  
JAMES VERNER SCAIFE  
CLASS OF 1889

1919

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



3 1924 095 665 760



Cornell University  
Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.



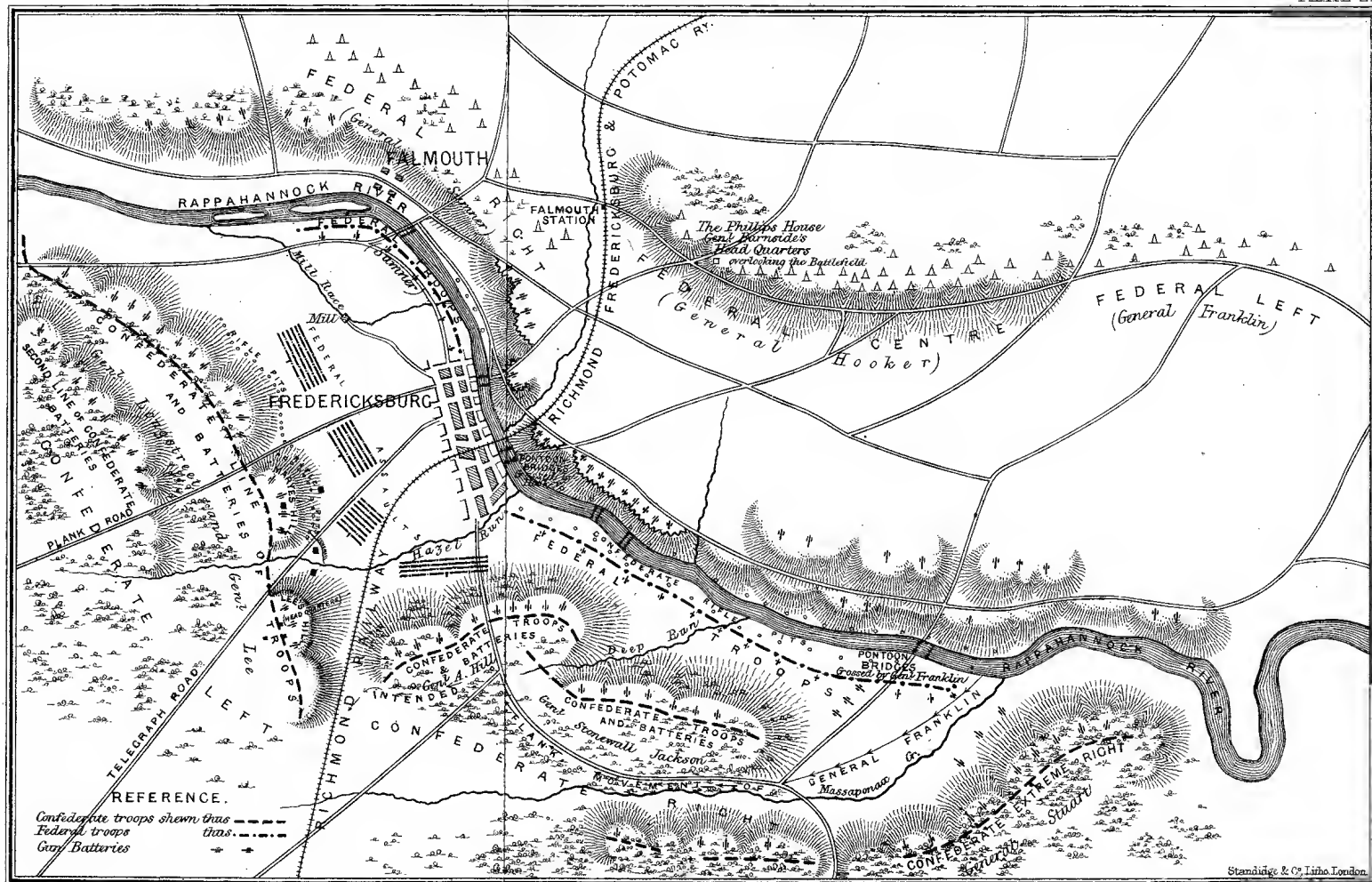






# SKETCH MAP OF THE BATTLE FIELD OF FREDERICKSBURG, BURNSIDE'S DEFEAT, DEC 13<sup>TH</sup> 1862.

PLATE 2.



# BATTLE-FIELDS OF THE SOUTH,

FROM

BULL RUN TO FREDERICKSBURG;

WITH SKETCHES OF CONFEDERATE COMMANDERS, AND  
GOSSIP OF THE CAMPS.

BY

AN ENGLISH COMBATANT,

(LIEUTENANT OF ARTILLERY ON THE FIELD STAFF.)

*WITH TWO MAPS.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

---

M.DCCC.LXIII.

LL





E  
470  
1.2  
B34  
v. 2

A.384250

Scaife

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

---

### CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Battle of the Chickahominy, or "Seven Pines"—The Plan of Battle —Annihilation of the Enemy's Left—Loss of either Army— General Johnson wounded . . . . .	1

### CHAPTER II.

Further Details of the Chickahominy Battle—Longstreet succeeds to the Command—General Lee the acknowledged Chief—Skirmish at Fair Oaks, an Episode—Gossip of Officers—Scenes and Inci- dents of the Battle — Our Negro Servants — The Louisiana Zouaves—Brigadier-General Jenkins and the South Carolinians —Care of our Wounded in Richmond—Hospital Scenes . . . .	15
---	----

### CHAPTER III.

Table Talk—Curious Instances of the Force of Imagination during the War—Arguments in vindication of the Southern Cause . .	33
---	----

### CHAPTER IV.

Talk about Slavery—Comparison of the Slave System with the Free-labour System of Europe — Comfortable Condition of Negroes on the Plantations—Their Indifference and even Dislike	
---	--

to Freedom—Insincerity of the Northern Fanatics—Their Treatment of Free Negroes—Crucial Tests of the Doctrine that all Men are born free and equal—The Question considered on religious and social Grounds—Attachment of Negroes to their Masters—Anecdotes . . . . .	51
---	----

## CHAPTER V.

June—Jackson in the Valley—Shields and Fremont—Battle of “Cross Keys”—Ashby killed—Battle of “Port Republic”—End of the Valley Campaign, and Rout of the Enemy . . . . .	69
--	----

## CHAPTER VI.

June—Stuart’s famous Raid round M’Clellan’s Lines before Richmond—Cowardice of the Enemy—Incidents at each Stage of the March—Gallantry of a young Lady—Attack on a Railway Train—Appropriation of M’Clellan’s Stores—Return to Camp with Booty and Prisoners—Sketch of General Stuart—Affair at Drainsville—General Joe Johnson . . . . .	83
--	----

## CHAPTER VII.

Gossip in Camp—Of Dress, Discipline, and Arms—Preference for Breech-loading Weapons—The Parrot, the Whitworth, and the Armstrong Guns—German Muskets—Advantage of Rifles over Muskets in Action—The Maynard Rifle—Berdan’s Sharpshooters—Our Sanitary Condition—Of our Medical Staff—Mortality amongst our Men, and its Cause—Insufficient and inferior Supplies—Of “Baggage” and Transportation . . . . .	99
--	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

June 26—Commencement of the Week’s Campaign before Richmond—Battles of “Mechanicsville,” “Beaver Dam Creek,” and “Ellyson’s Mills”—Terrific Battle Scene—Preparations for a further Advance . . . . .	119
---	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

	PAGE
The Week's Campaign before Richmond, continued — Battle of Gaine's Mill—Sketches of the Generals previous to the Battle —Position of Jackson—Advance of Wilcox, Featherstone, and Pryor—The Centre under Ambrose Hill—The Texan Brigade brought into Action—M'Clellan's Infantry Charge—Defeat of his Right Wing and Centre—The Field of Battle—Capture of Guns and Booty—Death of Major Wheat—Confederates in Striped Pantaloons . . . . .	135

## CHAPTER X.

Retrospect—Additional Particulars from one of Stuart's Cavalry —Capture of Depôts and Stores during the Action—Public Feeling at Richmond — M'Clellan begins his Retreat to the James River—Operations on the South Bank of the Chicka- hominy — Commencement of the Pursuit — The Railway Merrimac—Difficult Nature of the Country . . . . .	154
--	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Pursuit of M'Clellan continued—Battle of Frazier's Farm, June 30th—Terrific Fighting—Total Rout of the Enemy—Capture of Major-General M'Call—Precarious Position of General Hill —His Genius and Daring—Gossip with a Contrahand . . . . .	168
---	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

The Pursuit of M'Clellan continued—Where is Old Jackson?— The Federal Troops kept in ignorance of their Retreat—Use of Federal Cavalry—The 7th New York—Battle of Malvern Hill —Desperate Engagement, July 1st—Reckless Sacrifice of Life by Magruder—Gallantry of Colonel Norman—The Enemy, fully routed and demoralized, seek Protection under their Gun- boats . . . . .	182
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

Recapitulation and "Official" Review of the "Week's Campaign"—	PAGE
Loss and Gain—Scenes and Incidents of the Struggle—The Federal Army massed round the Heights of Berkley—Night Attack by our Artillery and Fearful Destruction—Subsequent Demonstration of M'Clellan—General Pope and other Northern Commanders rising in favour . . . . .	202

## CHAPTER XIV.

Movements of Beauregard's Army in Mississippi, after the Battle of Shilo—Our Defences at Corinth—General Halleck takes command of the combined Armies of Bnell and Grant, and follows on to Corinth—Both Armies intrench—Magnitude of the Federal Works—Beauregard suddenly retreats to Tullahoma—Policy of his Retreat—The Federals do not follow—Part of our Force detached from Beauregard, and, under command of Van Dorn, sent to defend Vicksburg against the Fleet of Commodore Farragut advancing up from the Gulf, and Commodore Foote's Squadron of Gunboats coming down the River from St. Louis—Building of the Rebel Ram <i>Arkansas</i> —She forces the Mouth of the Yazoo River, and runs the Gauntlet of the Fleet—Night Bombardment of Vicksburg—Flight of the Federals—Capture of a Federal Despatch Boat . . . . .	236
---	-----

## CHAPTER XV.

Movements in Virginia and Preparation for the Fall Campaign—Pope, and the New Federal Army on the Rappahannock—Combinations of the Enemy developing by M'Clellan on our Right and Pope on the Left—Preparations and Dispositions of General Lee—Jackson is sent in the Van—What he does, and the Manner of doing it—He breaks the Advance Corps of his old Friend, Banks—Battle of Cedar Mountain . . . . .	263
---	-----



## CHAPTER XVI.

	PAGE
August 12th to 31st —Pope, still in Force, watches Jackson on the Rapidan—The rapid Concentration of Confederate Forces there—Retreat of Pope to the Rappahannock, who establishes his Head-quarters at Catlett's Station—Stuart makes an Effort to capture that General, but arriving too late, seizes all his Wearing Apparel, Books, Papers, Plans, private and official Correspondence—Successful Flank Movement of Jackson round Pope's Right and Rear—He captures and destroys immense Stores at Manassas Junction, and disperses a Brigade sent from Alexandria to protect them—Sudden Retreat of Pope's Army towards Manassas—Engages Jackson with superior Forces, but without Results—Advance of Longstreet through Thoroughfare Gap, who soundly thrashes General Reno, stationed there to dispute the Passage—Longstreet forms a Junction with Jackson on the latter's Right—Arrival of General Lee—Heavy Reinforcements pour into Pope's Army—Second Battle of Manassas—Rout of the Enemy—Scenes on the Battle-field . . .	279

## CHAPTER XVII.

The Battle-field—Capture of Prisoners—Confusion of the Enemy's Retreat to Centreville—Loss of Baggage—Bivouac on the Field—Conversation of Officers with Prisoners—Burnside and M'Clellan's Reinforcements—How their Destination was changed from Point to Point by the Rapidity of Lee's movements—Retrospect—The Strong Position of Centreville is turned by One of Jackson's fast Flank Movements—The Enemy fall back from Centreville in great Haste and Confusion—Heavy Skirmishing with the Enemy's Rear Guard near Fairfax—Death of Generals Stevens and Kearney—Further Retreat of the Enemy, who enter their Fortified Lines round Arlington Heights and Alexandria—Jackson crosses into Maryland—He is followed by several Confederate Divisions, which hold the Mountain Passes at Boonsboro'—Jackson suddenly moves from Frederick City .	308
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII.

M'Clellan's unaccountable Inaction—Activity of Lee and Jackson —Engagements at the South Mountain—Approach of the Fed- erals to Sharpsburg—Battle of Antietam, or Sharpsburg, Sep- tember 17th—An Indecisive Engagement—Retreat of the Southern Army into Virginia—Jackson guards the Rear, and Repulse of the Enemy's Advance-guard, &c. . . . .	PAGE 343
--	-------------

## CHAPTER XIX.

M'Clellan again invades Virginia—Sigel is pushed forward from Washington, and takes Position at Manassas—The Federal main Army moves East of the Blue Ridge, and has Head- quarters at Warrenton—Lee marches in a parallel Line through the Shenandoah Valley—Surprise and Flight of Sigel upon the Appearance of Confederate Cavalry—Change of Federal Com- manders—Rapid March of the Federals to the Rappahannock— Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13th . . . . .	372
--	-----

# BATTLE-FIELDS OF THE SOUTH.

---

## CHAPTER I.

Battle of the Chickahominy, or "Seven Pines"—The Plan of Battle—Annihilation of the Enemy's Left—Loss of either Army—General Johnson wounded.

ON Friday, the 30th of May, our camps presented nothing unusual, nor were any movements in progress that indicated the early commencement of hostilities. During the night, a thunderstorm of unusual violence shook the heavens, and rain fell so heavily that the whole face of the country was deluged with water. The men in camp were exposed to all the violence of the storm, and the roads were rendered impassable, with mud three feet deep. The enemy were even worse off than ourselves, as the bottom lands at the head of the Chickahominy were flooded, and the stream itself much swollen. Active operations on their right were impossible.

Early in the morning (Saturday, May 31st) it was whispered that Johnson intended attacking their left, but in answer to the inquiry, "In such weather?"

it was answered that the bridges were washed away, rendering it impossible for M'Clellan to send over any of his right and centre to the assistance of his left; and that a large force would be thrown against his left, effectually crushing it before reinforced. Huger's division, it was understood, was to move down the Charles City road (our extreme right), and thus out-flank and turn the enemy's left, while Longstreet pushed our right down the Williamsburg road (two miles from Huger), and Whiting advanced his division near, and down the railroad (our right centre), thus hotly engaging the enemy at three points. As I have already said, it was impossible for M'Clellan's right and right centre to be engaged, the bridges having been washed away by the floods.

I was informed of the intended movement at 6 A.M., was soon in the saddle and away, since the opening fire was to come from Huger at eight o'clock. The affair was not known to any in town, but as I saw heavy columns of troops moving towards the Charles City road, I spurred along through the mud, and soon came up with the infantry advance of Longstreet toiling through the mire on the Williamsburg road. Regiments and brigades occupied woods on each side the road, ready for orders to move, but hour after hour passed, and no gun from Huger told of his whereabouts. The heavens were surcharged with clouds, rain-drops fell thickly, and from the unusual silence of pickets to the front, I supposed the action had been postponed. I saw Longstreet and others were mortified at Huger's slowness; President Davis, and members of his Cabinet,

seemed perplexed, and rode from point to point, anxiously expecting to hear Huger's guns open; but when, near noon, it was ascertained he was not yet in position, Longstreet determined to open the action and fight it alone. Our whole front was occupied with thick woods on marshy ground, the water in many places being two feet deep. I cast my eye to the rear, and saw brigades forming battle line in the woods: a courier dashed up the road, and soon after the chain of pickets began to "pop" rapidly in the front, a large body of sharpshooters dashed across the open in skirmishing order, entered the timber to the right and left of the road, and ere many minutes, were rapidly firing in the front.

Now began the slow advance of our regiments through the woods in support, and a few pieces of artillery were endeavouring to push up to the front through the frightful depth of mud. Horses were lashed and goaded, but all to no purpose; artillerymen were up to their middle in mire, tugging at long ropes, but their progress was very slow indeed; for the gullies, holes, pools, and rocks, threatened to capsize them at every turn. The enemy were reported in strong force at Barker's Farm, a large open tract about a mile distant, and well protected by a series of well-mounted redoubts and field-works.

As soon as our pickets had advanced and begun to skirmish, they were met by several regiments to the left of the road, but immediately a finely drilled regiment of North Carolinians (the "4th") advanced up the road at "double-quick," took the enemy in flank, delivered a volley, and dispersed them. This cleared



the way, and our regiments were slowly advancing through the woods, up to their middle in mud and water, having to brush off occasionally a cloud of skirmishers that disputed their passage. Casey, who commanded the Federals at Barker's Farm, was heavily reinforced by several brigades, and seemed inclined not to dispute our advance very vigorously until we emerged from the woods into the open farm, and in front of his earthworks and batteries. His pieces then opened fire with shell, but not one of ours could be brought to the front to reply, so that shot and canister were tearing through the woods, and inflicting considerable loss upon us.

The North Carolinians, having dispersed the first body of the enemy, marched into the woods on the left of the road, and advanced on Barker's Farm comparatively covered; Mississippians and others having worked their way through the swamp, did the same to the right. No attempt was made by our troops to advance far along the road, for hostile batteries swept its entire length through the farm. When our advance, therefore, had arrived at the edge of the woods, the open space in front was seen covered with troops, several batteries at the same time blazing away and rendering all advance impracticable. General D. Hill commanded on the right, and Brigadier-General Anderson the left of the road; but until their whole force could come up, they ordered their men to lie down for a short time, and allow the shell and grapeshot to pass harmlessly over them. Hill was impatient to begin, but, as the line was not formed, he obeyed

the advice of his men, and dismounted, but, instead of going to the rear, he quietly leaned upon his horse's neck, and criticized the enemy's fire.

As the various brigades moved into line, driving all before them, our line of fire seemed to be more than a mile in extent, though Huger and Whiting, on the right and left, had not yet used a cartridge. The enemy now began to move forward his infantry, mistaking our inaction for indecision, but was severely punished; for as our men received orders they moved forward in solid line, presenting an unbroken sheet of musketry fire. As there were no earthworks to the right and left of our advance, it was determined to flank and attack their centre.

One of our batteries now opportunely appeared in the open, and beginning to work vigorously drew upon it the fire of the enemy. Taking advantage of this, several of our regiments crept through the low brushwood in front of the redoubt, and at a given signal from the flanking parties, made a rush for the guns, cleared them, and, entering pell-mell into the earthwork, bayoneted all who opposed them. The guns, both inside and outside the work, were all captured.

Rapidly re-forming, though under fire of new works which opened in all directions, we once more advanced, and this we did again and again on various points, until about 3 P.M., when the battle raged with great fury. Additional pieces were arriving to assist us, but their progress was very slow on account of the roads, which were beyond all description boggy, and broken by immense mud puddles, half drowning the unfortu-

nate cannoniers, and upsetting caissons and ambulances. It was impossible, of course, to go through the woods, and as Casey's first line of defence was broken, troops and ammunition waggons were all moving to and fro along this one miserable narrow road in the greatest confusion. The enemy's position and camps, to my great surprise, I found comparatively dry, the water having drained off. Pleased with the firm, level ground, our mud-covered men of the Lynchburg battery now lashed their horses into a gallop, and dashed off through Casey's camps to the front with a wild cheer.

The line formed by our men now advancing through and past the camps to attack fresh positions, which vomited shell and grape upon us, was truly magnificent. I recognized Anderson, with Louisianians, North Carolinians, &c.; Jenkins with his South Carolinians; Wilcox and Pryor, with Mississippians and Alabamians. Floridans, Mississippians, and Georgians, had opened the fight, and, after resting, were advancing again; so that when their unearthly yells rang from wing to wing, the enemy stopped firing for a moment, and suddenly reopened again with terrific fury. Their vigorous onslaught told plainly that Casey had brought up Sedgwick, Palmer, and other divisions, and was calculating much upon the impassability of abattis that covered the front of his batteries and earthworks. Busy as I was, dashing about from point to point, it was impossible to learn what regiments were yelling so much in this place, or keeping up such incessant musketry-fire in that; all that I could perceive was, that their masses of infantry, though brought into action with much ability,

precision, and neatness, never pretended to offer us much resistance, but gradually fell back, or broke into confusion after a few volleys, when our men yelled and charged. Their resistance, however, was much stouter than at first, and they did not seem to place so much reliance on their earthworks, which now successively fell into our hands, with scores of dead lying in and around them in all directions.

It was now about four o'clock, and Longstreet's corps, under D. H. Hill, had driven the enemy a mile through their camps, capturing prisoners, stores, cannon, flags, redoubts, and whole camps of tents still standing. Still the fight continued with great fury. In fact, the attack down the Williamsburg road had been so vigorously pushed that we were far in advance of our general line, and our attack seemed to be triangular, Whiting and Huger having attempted nothing right or left. It was apparent also that we had progressed too far, and the enemy pushed forward a large force, against which our exhausted men could not successfully contend. Determined to hold the ground until reinforced, our troops occupied several of the enemy's field-works, turned the captured guns upon them, and by murderous discharges of musketry succeeded in checking their advance. By this time it was nearly dark, and General Johnson determined to move up Whiting on the left, in order to draw off some portion of the enemy's force. This movement relieved the pressure on Longstreet and Hill, who, reinforced and rested, advanced again, and drove the enemy entirely off Barker's Farm, and the surrounding openings, into the woods.

Whiting's attack now absorbed their whole attention. As we had advanced too far from our general line, they thought to attack Longstreet on the left flank and rear; but this was anticipated, and retiring with loss, they paid undivided attention to Whiting, who was advancing through the woods parallel with, and not far from, the railroad. It was much too late for this attack to have been begun, and the approach of darkness made any important result impossible. Cannonading, however, went on fiercely, and it was deemed possible that a large battery in the woods might fall into our hands; but the space all around it had been cleared of timber, and the ground was so swampy that the work seemed to be placed on a small island. The Tennesseans moved forward and drove back the infantry; our artillery progressed slowly up a miry lane, and were compelled to fight at every turn. Johnson and his staff rode to the front, and while ordering an attack, a battery opened from a thicket, and a piece of shell wounded him severely in the groin: the shock stunned him, he fell from his horse, broke two of his ribs, and was conveyed from the field with little hope of recovery.

The Tennesseans charged through the woods, dispersing the infantry, and, advancing to the battery through water up to their middle, took it, but had to retire for want of support. By this time it had become so dark that it was impossible to proceed farther; the flash of artillery was incessant; shells screamed through the air in luminous flight, and, bursting, made a beautiful pyrotechnic display; but it was impossible for our infantry to feel their way in the gloom. The enemy's

musketry flashed in the darkness like sheets of flame; but their fire, except in so far as it served to protect the flanks of their batteries, was a mere waste of ammunition. Keyes commanded the Federals at this point, and had prepared his line with great precision and care;\* but had Whiting commenced earlier, there can be no doubt he would have driven them on a line with Longstreet's advance down the Williamsburg road. As it was, the latter officer, with Hill as coadjutor, had made a fearful gap in the left wing of the enemy, but without producing any decisive result. We had gained a battle, but nothing more.

As I rode down through the enemy's camps, gazing at the destruction on every side, I met Franks, one of Longstreet's aids, looking as blue as indigo. "What's the matter, Franks? Not satisfied with the day's work?" I inquired. "Satisfied, be hanged!" he replied. "I saw old Jeff. (Davis), Mallory, Longstreet, Whiting, and all of them, a little while ago, looking as mad as thunder. Just to think that Huger's slowness has spoiled everything! There he has been on our right all day and hasn't fired a shot, although he had positive orders to open the fight at eight o'clock this morning. It is true that Longstreet and Hill fought magnificently, as they always do, and have gained a

---

\* General Erastus D. Keyes, United States army, is from the State of Maine; entered the service as brevet 2nd lieutenant 3rd Artillery, July 1st, 1832; and, in 1861, was major 1st Artillery, commission dating October 12th, 1858. He has risen rapidly during the war, and is about forty-five years of age. His division behaved well at "Seven Pines," and, although General Whiting assailed it furiously, was so well placed and protected by batteries that all our efforts were of little avail.

brilliant victory; but had Huger obeyed orders we should have demolished the enemy; as it is, their left is routed and demoralized, and we have gained nothing more substantial than a brilliant battle, when it was intended to have embraced an attack at three points, and all along the line, if the enemy accepted it. Johnson is wounded, you know, but is awfully mad about the miscarriage of his plans; the doctors say he will recover. Just to think that our best generals *will* poke themselves in the front—Sydney Johnstone was lost in that way, and I have seen both Longstreet and Hill foolishly riding in front of the enemy not less than a dozen times to-day. Hill must be a shadow or an immortal, for he exposed himself often enough to get his quietus a dozen times to-day.” My friend rode away towards Richmond, and I to the captured camp.

Teams were already hauling away cannon, stores, tents, and other booty; ambulances by the dozen were slowly moving off to the rear; while stretcher-bearers, in long, solemn procession, conveyed away the wounded men to temporary field-hospitals. Lamps flitted about in all directions, camp-fires were burning, and men cooking supper from the abundance of all things found in tents and commissary stores. General Casey’s effects were all seized, including his wardrobe and private papers. His mess-table stood, as it had been left ready for dinner; the plates and cups untouched; beds, bedding, camp furniture, desks, clothing, arms, provisions, stationery, and all things in abundance were found, including a hundred barrels of whisky, which had already been tapped, and half emptied by our weary

men. Prisoners were coming in every minute; dead and wounded lined the roads, or lay scattered through the fields and woods, and, as night advanced, their moaning was distressing to hear. Everything of use or value was soon conveyed to the rear, and long before morning little remained on Barker's farm, save the wounded, the dying, and the dead, piles of old clothes, and general rubbish unfit to be conveyed away. Our own wounded were rapidly conveyed to Richmond by ambulances, private carriages, and the railroad trains, which ran all night without interruption.

As morning approached, everything was prepared for the reception of the enemy, should they advance; but General Pryor and others, who held the battle-field, were ordered to fall back to our original position, should they attack in force. Several who deserted the enemy under cover of the darkness, informed us that Heinzleman, Sumner, and others had arrived; the former being second in command to M'Clellan, who was also present, and intended to "push" us. When morning broke, the pickets opened in a lively manner upon each other, and the attack began. Pryor's troops were of such excellent metal that they refused to fall back, and it was not until after they had thrashed twice their own number, and were in danger of being flanked, that they quietly fell back across the farm. The enemy did not follow; and Pryor's men sullenly occupied their old ground, south of the battle-field; none but a strong picket-guard being left to hold the place. Next morning (Monday) the enemy occupied Casey's camp-ground



again, but betrayed no inclination to accept our invitations to advance nearer Richmond.

While this was progressing on Sunday, down the Williamsburg road, the enemy endeavoured to dislodge Whiting's advance, near the railroad, from the ground captured the evening before. A lively fight was the consequence, during which our forces withdrew to their original lines, whither the enemy dared not follow. This latter skirmish was productive of little good, and we lost several promising regimental officers, including the brave Lomax, colonel of the 3rd Alabama Volunteers—a man whose brilliant promise was worth a hundred such combats. If Huger had been tardy in his movements down the Charles City road on Saturday, he was stirring and lively enough on Whiting's left in this fight, and must have marched his men unmercifully through the mud. He looked hale and hearty, and laughed good-humouredly as his advance moved into the woods, preparatory to the engagement. His attack, however, was countermanded, and the whole line assumed its original position, to lie idly on their arms for another month.

Our army seemed little affected by this victory; it did not cause any confusion or laxity whatever, and except for about half a mile square, in the vicinity of the Williamsburg road, there was little to disturb the peace and quiet of our lines in the sunshine of Sunday morning. Except for the ambulances and carriages, conveying away the wounded to Richmond, there was little to indicate the slaughter of 12,000 Federals the day before. Our own actual loss was not more than a

third of that number, incredible as it may seem.\* There was much inquiry among the soldiers at other

---

\* General Johnson says, in his report :—" We took ten pieces of cannon, 6,000 stand of arms, one garrison flag, four stand of regimental colours, a large number of tents, besides much camp equipage and stores. Our loss was 4,282 killed, wounded, and missing; that of the enemy is stated by their journals to have been 10,000, although, no doubt, that figure is far below the truth."

In the following address, the President, from his own personal observation and his past career, has shown himself to be a judge of good fighting, for none have fought more bravely than himself. Such testimony and such praise will appeal gratefully to the feelings and pride of our army, and will excite still more that affectionate gratitude for them which animates our whole land. For no halting testimony and no niggard praise does the President pay our heroes: "Nothing could exceed the prowess with which you closed upon the enemy, when a sheet of fire was blazing in your faces!" Noble men! The President says, he can neither ask nor desire anything better:—

*" Executive Office, June 2nd, 1862.*

*" TO THE ARMY OF RICHMOND.*

"I render to you my grateful acknowledgments for the gallantry and good conduct you displayed in the battles of the 31st of May, and with pride and pleasure recognize the steadiness and intrepidity with which you attacked the enemy in position, captured his advance entrenchments, several batteries of artillery and many standards, and everywhere drove him from the open field.

"At a part of your operations it was my fortune to be present. On no other occasion have I witnessed more of calmness and good order than you exhibited while advancing into the very jaws of death, and nothing could surpass the prowess with which you closed upon the enemy when a sheet of fire was blazing in your faces!

"In the struggle in which you are on the eve of engaging, I ask, and can desire, but a continuance of the same conduct which now attracts the admiration and pride of the loved ones you have left at home.

"You are fighting for all that is dearest to men; and though opposed to a foe who disregards many of the usages of civilized war, your humanity to the wounded and the prisoners was the fit and crowning glory to your valour.

"Defenders of a just cause, may God have you in his keeping.

*" JEFFERSON DAVIS."*

"The general will cause the above to be read to the troops under his command."

[The

parts of the line regarding the particulars of the engagement, but the victory was looked upon as a matter of course. Notwithstanding the vigilance of guards, many persons from Richmond rode out to see the field, but invariably brought something for the wounded, and took one or more to town in their conveyances; oftentimes providing for them in their homes, tending them with paternal care, and paying private surgeons to treat them rather than allow them to be roughly handled in the Government hospitals. Too much praise cannot be bestowed on the noble-hearted Virginians, male and (particularly) female, who were ever ready with open arms to succour the poor, ragged, bleeding Southern boy, fresh from the field of victory; for had many of us been sons rather than strangers to them, their care, comforts, watchfulness, and Christian charity, could not have been greater. The loving care and kindness bestowed on our unprepossessing, ragged soldiery can never be effaced from the memory of any who saw it on this and numerous other trying occasions.

---

The following, printed in extremely large type, appeared, by General Butler's orders, in his organ, the *New Orleans Delta*, June 12th, 1862:—  
“On May 31st, Richmond was evacuated, and General M'Clellan took possession of the city! General Banks had driven Stonewall Jackson headlong to the foot of General M'Dowell, who before this had probably kicked him over the border. So end the drama!—it is enough” (!)  
Comment is unnecessary.

## CHAPTER II.

Further Details of the Chickahominy Battle—Longstreet succeeds to the Command—General Lee the acknowledged Chief—Skirmish at Fair Oaks, an Episode—Gossip of Officers—Scenes and Incidents of the Battle—Our Negro Servants—The Louisiana Zouaves—Brigadier-General Jenkins and the South Carolinians—Care of our Wounded in Richmond—Hospital Scenes.

DURING the week it was confidently expected the enemy would marshal their forces, and make a rush upon us in retaliation for the thrashing we had given them ; and to be prepared for such emergency, our generals held their troops well together, and the utmost circumspection seemed to guide all plans and dispositions of force. Owing to the frightful gash Johnson had received, the command devolved on Longstreet, or seemed to do so by common consent, for though Gustavus Smith and others, perhaps, ranked before him, their energies were taxed in offices that became them more than "field" operations. Lee was now seen on horseback more frequently, and scarcely a day passed without my meeting him ambling along the roads, and in all kinds of out-of-the-way places. Though naturally quiet, thoughtful, and polite, the responsibility resting on him rendered his deportment even more so than usual, and had a stranger met him, his manner was so quiet

and placid, his dress so humble, and his gait so slow and unofficial, that he would never have recognized in him one whose genius and resources commanded the unbounded confidence and hopes of the nation.\* Brigadiers, with couriers and orderlies at their heels dashing to and fro, would have presented a much more impressive idea of importance and dignity, than the meek, grey-haired gentleman who passed us a few minutes before, without uniform, or blazing stars on his shoulder-straps, or distinctive colour.

Alarms were frequent during the week, both night and day, and the Texans under Hood down the railroad, and Wright's Louisianians and Georgians down the Williamsburg road, were continually popping at the enemy. These skirmishes were not of an important character, but since M'Clellan and the Northern press have manufactured out of them "a brilliant victory," which they term "Fair Oaks," it is necessary to give the reader some idea of an affair our men never termed more than a skirmish.

Some few days after the battle of "Chickahominy" or "Seven Pines," the enemy in possession of the old battle-ground vacated by us, gave it to "Sickles'" notorious brigade to hold, and to signalize their occupation they attempted to drive in our pickets. The 1st Louisiana were then in front, and learning that the New York "roughs" were in the vicinity, and occupied a small copse to the right of the road, and

---

\* It was evident that Longstreet was chief in the field only until Lee should vacate his rooms in the War Office, and permanently assume command.

south of Barker's Farm, a plan was formed to advance, and drive them away. Without consulting General Wright, eight companies of this regiment assailed Sickles' men, and though the enemy were superior in number, they drove them out of the thicket with much loss. Enraged at their rough treatment, Sickles' warriors, being reinforced, advanced again, but were a second time repulsed. It was an unimportant affair, and as the ground was not necessary to us, the Louisianians retired to their former position, and nothing was said or thought about the matter. Several of their pickets were subsequently captured, who informed us that Sickles' "roughs" and Meagher's "Irish brigade" swore to be revenged.

Several days after, a North Carolina regiment, not three days from home, which never drew trigger, were sent out on picket, and occupied the left of the road near Sickles' brigade; the Louisianians were on the right, in their old picket-grounds, and a Georgia regiment still farther to the right. General Wright's orders were to hold their positions, and, if attacked, reinforcements should be forthcoming. Sickles' men seemed to invite a combat, and the gallant Louisianians, nothing loath, advanced, drove in their outposts, occupied the thicket, and were advancing into the open ground after them, when three full brigades stood in view. The Louisianians, scorning to retire, were assailed with great fury, while flanking regiments moved on the right and left of the thicket, and waited for their retreat. Finding themselves overpowered, the Louisianians fell back through the wood, were followed up

and had to sustain a three-sided fire. Having secured themselves behind a fence, they continued the fight, expecting the arrival of reinforcements every minute. The North Carolinians on the left, though perfectly raw, sustained an unequal musketry fire for three hours, and gave not an inch of ground. The same may be said of the Georgians on the right.

Seeing that our men were not reinforced, the enemy endeavoured to get farther on our right, flank, and rear by marching two regiments through the woods. But a Georgia regiment (the 4th), hearing the continual fire, marched on our right through the woods to succour their brigade companions—the Louisianians—and, having a strong affection for them, were madened to think they had been played such a trick and overpowered. This flanking party had not progressed far ere they unexpectedly came upon the Yankees quietly taking ground on our right and rear. A volley was instantly given, and a charge ordered. The enemy were amazed; they were on our ground, and we on theirs; the fight was of but a few moments' duration, for the Federals fled, but, not knowing our exact position in the woods, came across several small parties, who slew them as they ran. The Georgians were fearfully excited on this occasion, and, disobeying all orders, rushed after the enemy, and often transfixed them to the earth. This affair was very short, but the carnage great, and, occurring accidentally, aggravated the rage of the Georgians to an uncontrollable degree. This charge seemed to settle the affair. Sickles, Meagher, and others, were disappointed, and

retired very early to their original position, ours being exactly the same as in the morning. I should hardly have mentioned this affair in connection with "Seven Pines," fought but a few days before, but as the Northern press required some new "sensation" to counteract the effects of Casey's annihilation, McClellan accommodated them with a flaming and false account of this skirmish; if I mistake not, he called it "the Battle of Fair Oaks," but the occurrence was really as here described, for I was on the ground and witnessed it from first to last.

I had been to Richmond, and was returning to camp, but, passing down the Nine Mile Road, stopped at an old wooden church, which had been converted into quarters by one of the generals. While lighting a cigar at a fire before the door, I observed the black boy very busy with soup and chicken, and the odour was very agreeable and enticing. "Whose boy are you?" I inquired of the negro, as he handed me a live coal. "Why, Lor bress you, Massa Tom! doesn't you know dis darkey? Massa Frank is here, and all of them!" But before I could be gone, Frank came clanking along with his heavy spurs, and insisted on my dismounting. "Recollect we've got chickens, and the devil knows what all, for supper, so tumble down and join us; you can't better yourself much, these times!"

Without more ado, I hitched the mare to a tree, and entered the old church, which I found converted into a quartermaster's office, with a party of officers and privates engaged in cards. The pulpit was gone, the windows broken, the shutters converted into tables, and



carpets used as make-shifts for blankets and bedding. Soap-boxes were our seats, an empty hogshead was turned on end and served as table, and an excellent supper was soon smoking before us. "I know you can't 'go' rye-coffee, Tom," said Frank, but, giving me a sly wink, introduced me to a bottle containing rye-whisky. Pipes were lit, and cards resumed, but, preferring the open air, several of us sat on the doorsteps, or lolled on the grass round the fire, and were soon busy discussing the "Chickahominy" fight, or "Battle of Seven Pines," as the Yankees term it.

"How came it to be called 'Seven Pines?'" asked some one.

"From Federal accounts," said a grey-haired paymaster; "it seems there were discovered seven pine-trees standing apart in an open field near Casey's headquarters, and his encampment was called so after them. 'Tis a pretty name enough, but I think, as we defeated them so utterly, they should have left naming the field to us. It would have looked more modest. Johnson calls it the 'Battle of Chickahominy,' from the river that runs across our front and to their rear. It was up this river that the celebrated Captain John Smith sailed when captured by Indians in early days. These banks were the hunting-grounds of pretty Pocahontas who saved his life. The story would read better had Smith married the poor lass."

"Well," said another, "the locality is for ever famous, but I see that M'Clellan, as usual, claims it as a 'victory.'"

"You were not foolish enough to suppose he would

commence telling the truth at *this* stage of proceedings? It is true he is the best man they have, but when the North, displeased with Scott's defeat, were beating about for a successor, had not M'Clellan fed the national vanity by sending flaming 'sensation' despatches about his defeat of Peagram at Rich Mountain, Western Virginia, they would never have given him a thought; for it must be confessed politicians do not seek out and reward true merit, while any dependants remain unprovided for. M'Clellan has attained his present flattering position by falsehood, and will seek to maintain it in the same manner. Falsehood is their settled plan of action. You remember the column of lies that appeared after Manassas, Leesburg, &c.

"They have the most fertile imaginations of any race on the globe, and could battles be fought on paper, and with woodcuts, instead of powder and sabre-cuts, the *Herald*, *Times*, *Tribune*, together with Harper's and Leslie's illustrated papers, would settle the business in gallant style. Their illustrations are certainly the most extraordinary productions of the age; it suits the multitude, 'pays' well, no doubt, and that is all any of them care for—they would squeeze a dollar until the eagle howled."

"I think the prisoners we took," said the major, "could give a version of 'Seven Pines' rather different from that published by M'Clellan. When Stone failed, and Baker fell at Leesburg, M'Clellan was indignant at the idea that *he* was said to have ordered their unfortunate advance. Baker was dead and could not speak; Stone, who *could* speak, was immediately incar-

cerated in Fort Warren. If the commander-in-chief did not order that movement, who *did*? Casey is accused of imbecility and cowardice because he has suffered a defeat, and is now moved to the rear. But this system of falsehood and hypocrisy cannot last long, although I believe if the enemy were 'whipped out of their boots' they would still shout 'victory, victory,' as loudly as ever.

"There is no doubt that poor old Casey was sadly out-generalled and beaten by Johnson, but had not our attack been delayed on the right and left, we should have driven them all into the river. Did you hear that we captured Casey's private papers, public documents, &c? It is so. A young man in the 12th Mississippi seized them and gave them to Whiting. Though the capture was important, and effected at great peril, the youth has never been complimented."

"Speaking of that regiment," said another, "I saw great bravery in one of their cooks. The darkies, as usual, *would not* remain in camp, but marched out with the rest, and fought behind their masters. When General Rhodes had pushed the enemy through their camps, capturing breastworks as he went, a ball struck him in the arm, and he became faint from loss of blood. As it seemed a critical moment, he refused to leave the field, but still cheered on his men as if nothing had happened. "Archie," a black boy, volunteered to go for water and bandages, and, mounting a horse, plunged along across the line of fire, and soon returned. The general was much relieved, and remounted. The enemy were now bringing forward their reserves, and

as no reinforcements appeared to our rear, it seemed that, weary though all were, we should be compelled to 'stick it out.' Falling back into one of the redoubts, Rhodes turned the captured guns on their late owners, but his men were failing fast from fatigue and want of ammunition. Although the enemy maintained a fierce triangular fire, he defied all efforts to dislodge him, and was lost in volumes of smoke. "Archie," perceiving that his company was short of cartridge, volunteered to run the gauntlet and make his way to the rear. The distance was fully a mile, but this brave boy ran rapidly along, filled half-a-dozen havresacks, and brought back several well-filled cartridge-boxes found on the way. He had scarcely re-entered the redoubt when a fierce clatter of musketry told the advance of our supports, and the day was ours. The darkies, generally, behaved like trumps, but this case came under my own observation. Ben, there, smoking and grinning among the pots, had a hand in it, and has a full suit of regimentals, somewhere, taken out of their tents! 'But if you ever let all the soup boil away again, sir,' said the major, smiling, 'and run off to the fight, somebody's head will feel sore, Ben!'"

Ben chuckled, and said he "didn't care for de Yanks, nohow; dey was no 'count anyways, 'cept make a big noise; couldn't hit a squirrel in a year, he didn't believe." The sound of a fiddle and darkies dancing to the rear of the church led Ben away, and the conversation continued.

The appearance of the prisoners was very dejected, and little information could be extracted from any of

them. I saw one tall, hard-fisted Alabamian carrying a stand of captured colours, and conducting some dozen Pennsylvanians from the field, including the standard-bearer. The latter seemed contented with his fate, and joked good-humouredly about the fortunes of the battle. "He wouldn't have surrendered," he said, "but found himself surrounded by three regiments, and gave up instantly to the first man that appeared." The Alabamian denied this stoutly, but jocularly; observing, in a whisper, "I found him sitting upon the colours behind a tree. Although I was alone, he made no resistance, but marched very quietly to the rear, anticipations of our tobacco-warehouses having no terrors for him."

"During the fight," said one, "I was much amused at the coolness of St. Paul's Louisiana Zouaves. They stood in line with North and South Carolinians, but were very restive, because ordered to lie down in the brushwood and wait for orders. Their red breeches were a conspicuous mark for the enemy, but they lay so low, and kept up such a lively fire, that the enemy would not advance. 'Well, boys,' said General Anderson, riding up, 'the enemy are before us, and in strong force!' 'Did you say, "Charge them," general?' asked Goodwin, their commander. 'Yes, boys,' replied Anderson, 'remember Butler and New Orleans, and drive them into h—ll!' No sooner said than done. This handful of determined men crept through the chaperelle, until within fifty yards of the foe, and although exposed to a cross-fire, suddenly rose, rushed with a yell upon the Pennsylvanians, delivered their

fire at fifteen paces, and routed them with the bayonet. This affair was witnessed by the whole left, but none comprehended why so few should have attacked so many. The charge was a brilliant but mad one, and the Zouaves suffered loss, for the enemy, discovering the smallness of their number, instantly re-formed, and poured in upon them a destructive fire. Our line instantly moved up, however, and the advance was again resumed. I afterwards saw some of these Zouaves conducting many prisoners to the rear, dozens being bandaged about the head and arms.

“These Louisianians seem to be great epicures, for scarcely one came off the field without having a well-filled havresack, and a canteen of liquor. Where or how they got these things is a mystery, yet I couldn't help noticing that many of the enemy were so affected by liquor as to be scarcely able to walk. I heard one of the Zouaves, sitting by the roadside, bathing his leg in a mud puddle, swear he had shot four men that day, and would not grant quarter at all: their cry was, ‘Orleans and Butler the Beast!’ They gave no quarter, and expected none. One Louisianian, while drinking at a spring, was shot at; the Yankee missed fire, and then approached to surrender. ‘I do not understand you,’ said the Creole, in French, and despatched the unfortunate Dutchman with the bayonet. This sort of thing occurred several times during the day; the Louisianians were so exasperated at the thought that their homes were possessed by the enemy, that they all seemed to be blind with passion and revenge. Longstreet personally presented a fine battle-

flag to this battalion a few days since, in highly complimentary terms."

"The South Carolinians deserve praise," remarked some one, "and I am glad that Jenkins displayed himself to advantage on that occasion. He acted as brigadier, and I do not see why the Secretary of War does not make him a general. He is highly educated in military matters, and far surpasses many of those political generals who are incessantly blundering among us.\* The Northern papers are loud in their praise of the steady manner in which his troops advanced against all difficulties, and marched over heavy abatis up to, and into, their batteries. It was a grand sight, indeed, to witness that memorable advance. Nothing could stop them; our ranks were shattered by shell and grape, yet the gap was instantly closed up, and through swamp, over timber, across fields, through camps, our

---

\* Brigadier-General Jenkins is said to be a Northern by birth, and was first lieutenant 1st Artillery in the old service. He left the army, and was principal of a flourishing military academy near Charleston (South Carolina) when the war broke out. He then raised a company, and was elected colonel of the 5th Regiment from that State. He afterwards recruited a regiment 1,500 strong, called the "1st Palmetto Sharpshooters." His conduct during the whole war in Virginia has marked him as a very superior officer. He greatly distinguished himself at "Williamsburg" (May, 1862), and commanded a brigade at "Seven Pines," where his generalship was loudly praised even by Northern journals. He is comparatively young, and can do more with raw troops, or recruits, than any officer I have seen in the field, rapidly bringing them up to a high state of efficiency. He has been wounded several times; but as long as 'tis possible to sit in the saddle, so long will he lead, and his fine voice can be heard far and wide. As a disciplinarian, he has few equals; and even when cannon are roaring in front, he gallops about, sharply reminding the men to "dress up! dress up there!" Should he live, South Carolina may rejoice in the possession of such an officer.

progress was steady and uninterrupted; officers in front, and men cheering and yelling like an army of demons. It is said that D. H. Hill lost many men, while waiting for his division to form, but soon made the enemy repay him with interest; for as his Alabamians, Louisianians, Mississippians, and Virginians rushed from the woods across the open, in splendid order, they carried position after position rapidly, and forced the fighting at a killing pace.

“Do you know I think our artillery acted indifferently. The truth is, we could not bring up pieces on account of the roads. Carter’s battery did good execution: the Lynchburg battery also. They drew their pieces by hand through the woods and along those boggy roads, and opened fire at twenty yards. I saw our guns not more than fifty yards distant from those of the enemy on several occasions; and when the fight was over the pieces stood almost muzzle to muzzle. We captured over a dozen very fine pieces. I myself counted twelve, and superb brass pieces they are—called ‘Napoleon’ guns, I believe.”

“What should you say the general loss was?”

“As far as I can ascertain,” said the major, “our killed and wounded would number about 4,000—not over that—besides a few dozen prisoners taken. General Hatton was killed on Saturday evening on the left. You must recollect that on Sunday morning down the railroad our men were surprised, and that, together with a few prisoners, Brigadier-General Pettigrew fell into their hands. The enemy confess their killed, wounded, and missing at nearly 12,000 men, besides



several standards and cannon. How many prisoners were taken I could not say, but I myself counted several hundred on their way to Richmond."

Although the number of our wounded was not considerable, Government endeavoured to provide comfortably for them; and for this purpose stores and warehouses, in various parts of the city, were fitted up, and surgeons, public and private, detailed to superintend them. There were several "committees for the wounded" in operation among the better class of citizens, and everything that private means could do, was devoted to the needy. From sunrise until sunset the bed-sides of our poor fellows were never deserted by kind friends, and I have known frequent instances where ladies attended, night after night, for weeks, fanning, washing, and feeding them; reading or writing for them, &c., so that the poor boys were oftentimes even bored by their many attentions and unceasing care. Scores were taken from military hospitals into private families, and tended for months, free of charge, and treated more affectionately than they might have been even at home. First-class surgeons gave their advice and attention gratuitously, and I know several medical men of standing who neglected lucrative practice to assist our men. Some took them home, and cared for them there; others instituted private hospitals for their proper treatment; and I remember instances where individuals have been comfortably provided with homes and proper scientific treatment for many months, not being allowed to depart until fully recovered from wounds or ailments. Frequently, during the battle of

“Seven Pines,” I saw hundreds of citizens drive their vehicles near the battle-grounds, and convey away the wounded; to see a muddy, ragged, bandaged soldier lolling in a fine silk-trimmed carriage was no uncommon sight.

In fact, so great was the anxiety of citizens to carry off the wounded, that one of their omnibuses, approaching too near the enemy's lines, on Sunday morning, was captured by an ambuscading party, and carried off in great triumph as a rebel trophy. This omnibus was but one of many furnished by hotels for this humane purpose, and several were capsized in the mud, and rendered useless for all future service. The poor fellows seemed perfectly contented with their treatment, and lay in bed smoking cigars or drinking “brandy toddy,” as happy as lords. In fact, many of them rather liked the change, and would not exchange their honourable scars for any amount. Cigars, brandy, fine food, and raiment were such a contrast to rags, constant duty, hard fare, and incessant marching.

Some who came out of camp to visit these invalids would look round with almost a jealous eye upon the many comforts provided for them. Ragged, sunburnt, and ill-fed as they were, many could but jocularly smile, and good-humouredly wish some friendly bullet had thrown *them* into such comfortable quarters. When the wounded in turn visited their comrades in camp, their appearance was so much improved, they looked so bright and cheerful, and had so many stories to tell about pleasures and pastimes, that our doctors caught many feigning sickness, in order to be sent to hospitals in town.

The theatres were a great temptation, and as convalescents were permitted to attend them, with properly signed "passes," these places were nightly crowded with military audiences, scores having arms in slings or bandaged heads. Such pieces, such music, such yelling and laughter were never heard before; the poor Germans in the orchestra were tired to death with repeats of "Dixie," "My Maryland," and the "Marseillaise"—tunes which the audience accompanied with vocal efforts of their own, or embellished with a running accompaniment of stamps and howling. "Blood-and-thunder" productions were greatly in vogue, and those pieces wherein most of the characters were killed rose decidedly in the ascendant. "A tip-top fight" was what the boys delighted in, and an unlucky hero would never fall without an accompanying yell of "Bring on your ambulance!" Had these men had free access to liquor, its effect would have been disastrous; but this was successfully prohibited, thanks to the vigilance of the provost-marshal, General Winder.\*

The greatest amount of affection seemed to be lavished upon privates; officers for the most part were treated coldly by the masses, and allowed to shift for themselves

---

\* Brigadier-General John H. Winder is a native of Maryland, and about sixty years of age. He entered the service as brevet second lieutenant Artillery, July 1, 1820; resigned August, 1823; appointed second lieutenant 1st Artillery, April 2, 1827; captain 1st Artillery, October 7, 1842; brevet lieutenant-colonel 1st Artillery, September 14, 1847, and commanded at Barrancas Barracks (opposite Fort Pickens), Florida, when the war began. He has been acting as provost-marshal-general at Richmond during the war, and renders essential service in that department; in truth, no half-dozen men could fulfil the labours of this eagle-eyed and indefatigable old man.

as best they could, for it was considered far more honourable to carry a musket than to loiter round Richmond in expensive gold-corded caps and coats. Volumes might be written upon the great kindness shown to our troops by the ladies of Virginia: although the women of Winchester, Leesburg, Charlottesville, and other places, did much for the common cause, their noble-hearted and open-handed sisters of Richmond far surpassed them all. Nothing that human nature *could* do was left undone; and although much of this kindness and care were thrown away upon rude, uncouth objects, their humanity, patience, and unceasing solicitude are beyond all praise.

But what shall I say of the army doctors, and nurses? *There was a great improvement!* On the field, they endeavoured to do their duty; but surgeons of Virginia regiments evinced more care and anxiety than any others, and seemed to be far more skilful and expeditious. The field hospitals presented an awful sight. I entered one, but never desire to see another. It was an old dilapidated house, with scarcely anything standing except the brick chimney. The sufferers lay inside and outside on straw, but such was the flow of blood, that all their garments, bedding, straw, and everything around was of a bright red colour. In one corner I saw a large pile of arms and legs; many already dead were lying on the grass, with blankets thrown over them, while not far distant, in the woods, a party were engaged in digging long trenches for sepulture. These things were passing under the eyes of all, and those just brought in from the field were spectators of operations going on,

hearing moans and groans incessantly. Sickening as such sights were, our men bore up under it wonderfully well, and did not wince at all when called upon to take their place upon the unhinged door which served as an operating table. Yet how could all this be otherwise? Such is the reality of war, and those who paint it in glowing colours, with all the pomp and circumstance of triumph, should never fail to add a few words of truth against encouraging the sacrifice of life for the sake of ambition and unsubstantial causes. Had it not been for the great love evinced for us by the good people of Richmond, hundreds of wounded would never have answered roll-call again; and but for their paternal care, coupled with the extraordinary exertions of Government, the increasing warm weather would have added greatly to our bills of mortality.

## CHAPTER III.

Table Talk—Curious instances of the Force of Imagination during the War—Arguments in vindication of the Southern Cause.

DURING dinner on one occasion the subject of “imagination” came up, and I was very much amused with the views of all parties upon its “power and effects.” There were several city and army doctors present, who, considering the subject to be an entirely professional one, would have monopolized all our attention; but several broke in with their individual experience, and leaving others to decide what is, and what is not, imagination, told some very amusing and occasionally tragical stories regarding its “power and its effects.”

“When the fight at Manassas had terminated,” said Adjutant Flint, “being then in the ranks, I was detailed as one of a ‘burying party,’ and was out all night, and most of the following day. As our regiment had been engaged near Centreville, I was hunting along the slopes for any poor fellow who required assistance, when my attention was called to moans in the bushes near by. I called some comrades, and began to seek for the sufferer. We found him leaning against a tree, near which a shell had exploded—his countenance was

ghastly pale, and he rolled his eyes apparently in great torture. 'What's the matter, lieutenant?' I asked; but he groaned, and fell on his face. 'What can we do for you?' inquired another. 'Oh, leave me to my fate, boys,' was the sorrowful and faint reply. 'I'm dying every minute, and can't last long—I'm bleeding internally, and my blood is flowing fast! Farewell to my own sunny south; good-by, boys, and if anybody shall ever visit Holy Springs, tell 'em that Shanks died like a patriot for his country, and shot four Yankees before he fell! Give my love to the colonel and all the rest of the boys, and when you write don't fail to give my last dying regards to Miss Sally Smith, if any on ye know her, and say I was faithful to the last'

"Affected beyond all words by the poor lieutenant's simplicity and sufferings, we determined to carry him to the nearest ambulance, and ask a doctor to look to his wound. We placed him in a blanket, and in solemn procession had proceeded about half a mile when he positively refused to go farther. 'Let me down gently, boys, I can't stand shaking—there isn't much blood in me now, nohow, and I feel I'm passing away from this vale of tears and wicked world every minute, and can't last long.' A doctor was passing at the time, with sleeves rolled up, looking more like a gentlemanly butcher than anything else; and in whispers we spoke of the condition of poor Shanks, who was now groaning more piteously than ever. 'I think he's bleeding internally, doc,' said I, 'for I don't see any blood, although his momentary contortions are awful to look at,—if he wasn't suffering so much I

should be tempted to laugh.' 'Where are you hit, lieutenant?' inquired the surgeon tenderly. 'Oh, don't touch me, doc, pray don't—I'm mortally wounded under the left shoulder-blade, the ball has ranged downwards, and I'm bleeding internally.'

"In a trice Shanks's coat was cut in all directions, but yet there was no wound visible, until, to stop his lamentable groans, the surgeon asked again, 'Where *are* you hit—don't groan everlastingly, Shanks, but place your hand upon the wound, and let's see what can be done for you.' The place indicated was as sound as any part of his body, and after searching in vain for half an hour, and cutting the clothes off his back in search of blood, the doctor gave Shanks a slap on the seat of honour, laughing as he said, 'Get up, Shanks, and don't make a fool of yourself any longer; you are as sound as a trout, man—your wound is all imaginary.' We all began to laugh heartily, and were about to take signal vengeance on him for making us carry him half a mile through the mud and bushes, when Shanks jumped up as lively as ever and threatened to whip any man who should dare laugh at him—a threat that would have been fulfilled to the letter. I was sorry for the poor fellow, but learned that a shell had burst within a few feet of him, and feeling certain that he was wounded by a fragment, he suffered all the symptoms of a wounded and dying man; in proof of his sincerity, poor Shanks had lain out in the rain all night, and when we found him, he looked the most lamentable object for a first lieutenant that can possibly be imagined. The story got wind in some mysterious



manner, and Shanks always had an engagement on hand to 'whip somebody,' until at Gains Mill he fell mortally wounded; he was the last line captain left in his regiment, all his confrères having dropped in less than an hour."

"This war has caused many of us to rise," said Captain Todd, reflectingly; "but how long any of us will remain in the land of the living it is difficult to say. At Bull Run I was orderly of my company, and felt greater pleasure in carrying a musket than wielding a sword as at present. The enemy were swarming across Blackburn's Ford in great force, and we, as skirmishers, received them with a brisk and deadly fire until ordered to fall back. Our captain had fallen within a few feet of me, with his face to the enemy, and for a long time we fought around him like tigers, and finally carried off the body. I felt sensible that a shot had grazed my side, and was very faint. To fall, then, was to be thrown into the enemy's hands, so mustering all possible strength, I managed to get back to the regiment, which was re-forming some little distance in the rear, preparatory to attacking the enemy in line. The excitement and bustle of the moment drove all other thoughts from my mind—we fell in, advanced, delivered our fire, and repelled the enemy very handsomely; but while reloading, I thought of my wound, and felt a sharp pang in my side, which, together with drops trickling down, made me certain I was seriously hurt; the musket fell from my hands, and I fainted.

"I had not lain many moments when the noise awoke me to consciousness, and I tore open my jacket, pulled

off my shirt and reduced it to rags. I applied the bandages to my side, and felt relieved, although I was so sickened with the sights around me that I forbore to look at my own hurt. Removing one bandage and replacing another I saw no blood, and to my astonishment discovered I was uninjured. Had any one discovered me at the moment I should have died from mere shame, for I could have sworn my hurt was a serious one. The truth is, a shot must have passed very close, for my jacket was cut; but the drops I felt trickling down were nothing but perspiration, and the sudden pang nought but a sudden rush of cold air upon my exposed person. I could never have imagined the possibility of my being so deceived by imagination, but yet such is the candid fact. During the day I heard several complaining of dislocated shoulder-blades, broken ribs, &c.; but these generally were imaginary hurts arising from the concussion of shot or shell. At Drainsville I saw one young man lying under a tree, and his left arm seemed lifeless; he said it was hanging by a few shreds to the shoulder, but he had not looked at it. Upon examination I saw that a shell must have passed very close, for the flesh was puffed up considerably; yet beyond this the doctors said there was no injury. The concussion had caused the swelling. I have frequently seen men fall from this cause, and remain senseless for a long time; and several in our regiment have become hopelessly deaf in the same way. My hat has been blown off twice by the rush of air, and I have more than once felt my cheeks tingle, and grow hot from the closeness of shots."

“But this is all one-sided,” said Lieutenant Small. “I have known imagination to work as powerfully with members of the profession as upon their patients. When the wounded were being brought into the churches of Leesburg, friend and foe were accommodated alike with whatever we had, and the ladies were working like angels in various offices of mercy and kindness. Outside one of the churches a tent was raised for the reception of the dead. I sought for a poor friend of mine among the many bodies, and found two Yankees, thrown in among the others. They were sighing, and I immediately pulled them out, placed a body under their heads for a pillow, and examined their hurts. One had received a shot in the left eye;—being a common round musket ball, it had passed round the skull, and come out at the left ear. In the second case, the ball had passed in a direction exactly the opposite of this. They were not dead, and I felt annoyed that they were thrown aside to die, while many of their comrades were comfortably provided for in churches and schools.

“The doctors were busy and treated me like a Union sympathizer, and to my appeals on behalf of suffering humanity, swore roundly that they had something more important to attend to, particularly as the two Yankees were pronounced by all the faculty as ‘hopeless cases.’ My appeals to the ladies were answered by instant kindness. They proceeded to the ‘dead tent,’ and told me these sufferers had been there all day, and were considered dead. I procured some excellent whisky for them, their faces were washed, more spirit was adminis-

tered at proper intervals, food was given, and to the astonishment of all the doctors these two fellows were walking about the streets of Leesburg, in less than three days, comfortably smoking their pipes, or fighting their battles over again round the fire of the mess-rooms. I know, too, an instance of a young man who came off the field of Manassas, with a cloth tied over the top of his head, and was begging all to pour cold water on it, for a shell had passed so close as to scalp him. Upon examination, he proved to be unhurt, but the concussion was so great as to cause all the feeling of being scalped, nor could he be convinced of the contrary until after looking in the glass, when he exclaimed, with great naïveté, ‘ Well, I’m mighty glad the har is thar, but if I didn’t think I war scalped by that ar shell, you can just shoot me, that’s all ; for them whizzing, screechy things make my head ache and knees to tremble just to think on ’em ! So I ain’t scalped, doc, eh ? Well, if I didn’t think I was, I be darned ! particular as my head feels half off even now, and I can’t hold my neck straight to save my life.’ ”

“ I had a patient at Warrenton,” said another, “ who caused me much annoyance and vexation. The wound was in his thigh, but he persisted in saying that the ball had not been extracted, though any one could see from the character of the wound that the shot had passed out. For several days I tried to convince him that he was progressing favourably, but as soon as my back was turned he represented my cruelty to him in such fearful colours that the brigade surgeon came and had angry words with me. I explained matters, and

upon examination he apologized, laughingly, and said he would perform the operation himself. My former patient, on learning that the brigade surgeon was about to work upon him, seemed in ecstasies, and would not allow me to go near him again, saying to himself, 'I have found *one* among the crowd who understands my case, and that darned ball will come out at last.' At dressing-time, the brigade surgeon appeared before my thick-headed patient, made a terrible display of his instruments, and asked No. 5 'if he was ready?' The parade of knives and lancets did not move a muscle of No. 5, rather he seemed pleased, and the mock operation proceeded. His thigh was properly dressed, and after several flourishes of the probe, a ball was shown to the patient, who seemed much rejoiced, and smoked his pipe with greater pleasure than ever. His health began to improve daily, and he was soon convalescent, but all the kindness in the world could not make him like me as at first, and although it was explained to him subsequently that the operation was only a 'sham,' he persisted in thinking the brigade surgeon a fine fellow and myself a fool."

The conversation soon changed to other matters.

"I beg leave to differ with you, captain, upon that point," said one. "I cannot believe that the universal sentiment of the Charleston Convention *was* in favour of Stephen A. Douglas: there were many there who even knew more of the true character of the man than *I* did, and were fully aware that a person of his unsatisfactory standing could never be the standard-bearer of the South, and bring about that reconciliation which

was long necessary between the North and ourselves. The idea of secession was not a new or strange one. All who have studied the current of adverse views for the past few years are as fully aware as myself of the fact that the leading men of all sections saw the inevitable result which the fanaticism and power of the North would bring about; and it was the object of the South to prove how much the North loved us by seconding our proper candidate, John C. Breckenridge. It was the proof that we needed, and finding the North resolved to crush out all our hope of justice or a fair hearing in the councils of the nation, it was determined to make a bold push for our freedom, and for ever separate from those who, from the mere accident of possessing power and numerical strength, were determined to out-vote all our propositions, right or wrong; to carry the high hand of power over us, and force us into a state of uncomplaining acquiescence; and to quietly become, once and for ever, the humble producers of those staples, the handling and exportation of which were annually enriching them and impoverishing ourselves. The natural excellences of our coast for harbours and arsenals were never looked into; lighthouses, breakwaters, and repairs were never considered; we had no right to suppose that dockyards and the like should be placed South, for these things might eventually increase our prosperity, and that *must* not be!

“Then, again, territories were crowded by Northern immigration, so that the political balance should always remain with them; railroads could not be constructed South to the Pacific—better routes were always found

North, and when private enterprise was excited to compete, Government appropriations were always made to Northern speculators. Even the routes of our commonest products were always directed Northward for exportation and trade, and for many years there seemed to be a settled plan with Northerners to favour all that pertained to themselves, and ignore our commonest rights and interests. The results are that the tide of emigration has always been guided North. The army and navy establishments were always located there; government works and improvements were to be found there only; private enterprises of a national character were always well patronized and protected there; and, although not a manufacturing people, whatever spirit of emulation or competition was exhibited among us, it never met with favour. In all things their maxims were apparent, 'We are more numerous and will rule as it suits ourselves—*our* interests must be always attended to—we know nothing of the rights, privileges, or customs of those who did most to gain our independence; all we know and remember is—*ourselves* !'

“These are not *my* ideas alone, but the sentiments of the whole South. Were not Douglas, Buchanan, Pierce, Dickenson, and infamous Butler, supposed friends of the South, fully aware of all these grievances, and did they attempt to ameliorate our condition, or seek to obtain for us common justice, or even an impartial hearing? Ambitious as they were for favour, the North was always courted, as being the most populous, and whatever praise they seemed to bestow upon us was qualified in such a manner as to be construed in

*any* way. Douglas, of whom much has been said, was *not* a truthful or reliable man, for it is on record that in his campaign against Lincoln for the Senatorship in Illinois, his speeches were adapted to suit communities ; so that what pleased those of Chicago—viz. a mild sort of Abolitionism—was changed into ultra-Southernism in the lower counties of the same State. Much of the same hypocritical style was adopted by his opponent Lincoln, who, had he expressed the sentiments in Massachusetts, openly avowed in Southern Illinois, would have been mobbed and hooted through the public streets. This is not hearsay, but *positive knowledge* orally obtained during their canvass of the State.”

“ It seems providential,” remarked another, “ that the disruption of the Union *has* taken place, and especially at this time, for the North was gaining ground too rapidly, and insensibly reducing us to servitude. A longer delay would only have added greater odds against us, as the election of Lincoln fully proved that no respect was paid to the feelings or interests of the South. We had forewarned the North, moreover, of the consequences—we had solemnly done so—it remained with them, therefore, to prove their *disinterested* love of the Union by electing one that should have satisfied both parties. When a contract is made by several for their individual and united good, it betrays bad faith in any to attempt imperialism or despotism because time and fortuitous circumstances may have enriched them, individually, at a greater rate than others. The old compact was made for the *good* of the several States making it, nor were local institutions



objected to, in the days when Southern troops marched through Massachusetts, and New-Englanders remained at home."

"There is a decided difference in blood, climate, and predilections," said a third. "It is said we are come from a common stock; but certainly the hot blood and high-toned spirit of the South cannot be one with the icy, fanatical, psalm-singing Puritanism of Massachusetts. Is it not rather traceable to the courtly, plumed, and belted cavaliers of Maryland and Virginia—men whose lineage is traceable through heraldic honours, who carried swords by right of birth—and not those whose history either in their old or their new home could not be brought to light without causing them to blush? The North in short has supplied a field of enterprise in which but little capital was necessary, and hence it has become the common receptacle of all races and classes of men, while few have journeyed South, where comparatively large means were necessary to start them in competition with the residents. Some, like birds of passage, have come to enrich themselves, but not to settle as permanent residents in a country whose productions, climate, manners, and resources were totally unlike all to which they had been formerly accustomed. It cannot be denied by any who have lived in the South and studied its character, that we have intermixed less with in-comers than those of the North."

"I agree with those views in the main," said one, "yet I cannot but think that much blame is due to us for our habitual carelessness and apathy in things pertaining to our rights and necessities. We have looked

upon human nature incorrectly, and attributed to it more honesty and honour than it possesses, and now we feel surprised to find the world other than we expected. We might have seen long ago, that, with a great influx of abolition feeling and atheism into the country, it was time to prepare for the 'irrepressible conflict;' instead of which, by remaining inactive, we allowed the deluge to burst upon us before the ark was ready. From the year 1832, when South Carolina first seceded, and Jackson forced her back into the Union, until the present hour, it was clear to all that a disruption was inevitable, and it behoved us to prepare for it as quietly as South Carolina did, and not waste our energies in useless congressional debates, which could never wring one particle of justice from the absolutism of the jaundiced-eyed majority."

" 'Tis true that our leaders did not exert themselves discreetly," said another, "or the same results could have been obtained with less cost. Except among a few, there was no system of united action; and those few, from paucity of means and insufficient influence, maintained profound secrecy and gave no inkling of ulterior objects. Calhoun and others spoke sententiously, and their hints contained volumes of meaning to the student; but the majority had such implicit confidence in the honesty and integrity of the North that anything to the contrary would have been construed into downright treason, because too apathetic in watching the current of events and the 'manifest destiny' of our cause."

"That is correct," said another, "but it must be confessed that our statesmen have been more energetic

and watchful since the time of Calhoun, than before, and it is mainly owing to President Davis that our country has risen at all. Since his *début* in public life, Jeff. has applied himself to the study of past history, and of men and measures. No one understands the wants and aspirations of the South better than himself, and from early manhood, he has kept his own counsel and been patiently planning affairs as we see him now. In Congress he was ever willing to undertake any office or responsibility that might enlighten him regarding our peculiarities and resources ; and his West Point education gave him an assurance of his powers, which displayed themselves brilliantly and conspicuously in the campaign of Mexico. Indeed our highest officers were jealous of his talent, and, viewing him as a dashing and ambitious Southerner, threw every conceivable obstacle in his way to prevent him from superseding them.

“ When Jefferson Davis undertook the office of Secretary of War under Pierce, he was in a position for which he was pre-eminently qualified, and made himself perfect master of all that pertained to that office. There was not a fort or barracks throughout the length and breadth of the country which was not familiar to him, and at the same time he fixed his eye attentively on all the rising talent of the army, and made a note of those students at the various military and naval colleges who had distinguished themselves, and might leave the seclusion of private life under the pressure of times to come. There was scarcely one officer that came within his knowledge, whose qualifications, antecedents, sentiments, and ambition were not duly chronicled and remembered,

so that when hostilities *did* eventually break out between us, Davis had but little difficulty in making judicious selections from whatever talent patriotically joined our ranks and cause.

“The knowledge that he acquired as Minister of War has proved of incalculable advantage to us, for he knows exactly what the North can and cannot accomplish, and fully understands all its resources beforehand. Whatever information he lacks is periodically transmitted through proper channels, so that he seems gifted with double sight and astonishes the Cabinet at Washington by his accurate information of their designs and plans. Coming, as he did, in daily contact with such men as Scott, Lee, M‘Clellan, Beauregard, Heintzleman, and a host of other talented officers, he could not be far from understanding the aspirations and particular qualifications of each: in fact, President Davis was the first to exclaim, from his thorough knowledge of the man, ‘M‘Clellan is the best officer they could select; but they will not keep him long!’ a remark which seemed prophetic. Nor can we forget the part which Davis and his friends instigated Floyd, Cobb, and others to play when Cabinet Ministers to Buchanan—it may seem disreputable, but I don’t think so, for self-preservation is the first law of nature. When it became evident that North and South could no longer live amicably together, and that dissolution was inevitable, Floyd, as Minister of War, prepared for the crisis by quietly sending the South her fair proportion of arms. The transaction was a secret one, but yet was commented upon by watchful men at the North. It was said, however, that we might

soon be engaged with Spain or some other power, and that the South was the best location for them. Cobb, in the Treasury, did many things to embarrass the North, and facilitated all movements as best he could for our welfare and uprising. His financial abilities, or talents of any sort, were not much ; but silence and discretion were all that was required of him."

Another remarked, " I cannot but admire the patriotism and alacrity with which army and navy officers joined the fortunes of their respective States ; though they knew well that the declaration of independence was merely an 'experiment,' and that every chance was against us, for we had neither army, navy, nor resources of any kind. Many of these men were fast rising to eminence in the old service, and would have been comfortably provided for upon retirement. Much of their property was situated North, and all the expectations of years were at stake ; but, old or young, they immediately surrendered everything and offered their services to us, although for a long time our cause seemed one of Herculean labour, and devoid of prospective success.

"Lee, for instance, was considered one of the finest engineers in the service, and was second only to Scott in the estimation and love of the people. Albert Sydney Johnstone stood perhaps higher as an active commander, but few, if any, surpassed him in a thorough knowledge of his profession, or greater ability in council. His property and effects were in Northern hands ; he was offered chief command in the field ; but he abandoned all, and, bereft of everything, offered himself to his native State. Johnson, Beauregard, Van Dorn, Evans,

Longstreet, Ewell, and a host of others made similar sacrifices, and for a long time were without any settled rank or command. They had to fight their way up, and have successfully done so. The same may be said of the navy. Lynch, Tatnall, Ingraham, Hollins, and others, followed their illustrious example. Maury—the world-renowned Maury—had all to lose and nothing to gain by joining our cause; but he did so, and refusing the offers and hospitalities of kings and princes, busied himself, industriously, in any department where his services might be of value. Hollins, indeed, brought his ship with him, and was cursed for it from east to west by the North. We cannot expect to do much with our navy at present, but we have talent enough in the forthcoming times of peace to found a navy which shall eclipse the achievements of our army, if cruel necessity occasion its services to be called for. There are many still in the army and navy of the North who rightfully belong to us—some refused to believe in our ultimate success, and thought a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush; others resigned, but could not get South; some were accused of sympathy and imprisoned; while others quietly settled down into business and now await the adjustment of affairs, to come and live among us.”

“Yes, yes,” said one, emphatically; “I expect there will not be scores only, but thousands expressing excellent Southern sentiments ‘when the war is over,’ and asserting their sympathies were always with us. There will *then* be thousands of Jews and Dutch willing to swear the same until black in the face; but if I am not

mistaken, our people understand *that* question as well as Government, and will take more than usual care to protect themselves against the hordes which have been the chief movers and instigators of all the 'isms, usurpation and despotism, of the North. There are hundreds of democrats in New York and other States, particularly in the West, who now sincerely regret that avarice and love of power prompted them to 'use' the fanatical masses to lift them into power, and habitually support measures which they knew were tyrannical and unjust. The people have already considered every phase of that subject, and will act discreetly in the future."

## CHAPTER IV.

Talk about Slavery—Comparison of the Slave System with the Free-labour system of Europe—Comfortable Condition of Negroes on the Plantations—Their indifference and even dislike to Freedom—Insincerity of the Northern Fanatics—Their treatment of Free Negroes—Crucial tests of the Doctrine that all Men are born free and equal—The Question considered on religious and social Grounds—Attachment of Negroes to their Masters—Anecdotes.

“WELL, Tom, I have just received a letter from home, which informs me there is scarcely a white person in our whole parish!” said Frank, one evening after supper. “What if the darkies should grow discontented and rise?”

“If there had been any such possibility,” one replied, “the Yankee Government would soon have seized upon it for our destruction or chastisement. There is no likelihood of such an event, however. I know districts in Mississippi where there are not more than one or two old white men to a slave population of from three to five thousand. In fact, all our plantations are conducted by the negroes themselves, in the absence of overseers or masters. I have offered large salaries for overseers for my places, but they never stay long—they are all off to the wars. My wife informs me that all things are progressing quietly and favourably as ever—my mulatto



boy Bob superintends the Upper, and Black Jim the Lower Place, and have raised excellent crops in my absence. Talk to *me* of our darkies rising to massacre the whites! Why, I wager my life that all the inducements in the world could not draw off *my* servants from me. Most have grown up from childhood with me, and lived as I have done; and when one of these rabid Abolitionists counts the cost of keeping servants, he would be loth to expend as much upon white labour. Just look at Nick out there, round the camp fire, kicking up his heels in a dance! that boy costs me much more—yes, double what I should have to pay for cook hire in Europe; and more than that, when he gets old, no matter how much money he may have by him, I am compelled by law to provide for all his wants.

“Think you that the major’s boy would buy his freedom, although to my knowledge he has 2,000 dols. in gold, hid away in an old stocking? You know as well as I do, that all our boys are making money—some as much as 20 dols. per week—by washing, cooking, selling things, and the like, but reason with them about buying their freedom, at ever so low a figure, and they grin, jingle the dimes in their greasy pockets, and tell you, ‘Massa libs better dan I kin, and when dis chile gets ole, Massa must take care ob him.’ And sure enough we *must*. They argue, and to the point it seems to me, thus: ‘I am Master’s boy, and must do what he tells me. No matter what the price of things may be, I must be well fed and clothed, and my health carefully attended to by his own physician, or some other, even should he have to pay 10 dols. for a visit. He gives me

from one to two dollars every week for spending-money: I live in the house with him, grow up with him, attend him in all his sports: my wife lives with me, and he takes care of both, in sickness or health, in youth or age. If I do not act properly, he sells me, but few negroes are sold who mind their business.'

"Count up the cost, in times of peace, and tell me whether this, and my other boys, do not cost me more than two and a half or three dollars per week, the average wages of two-thirds the labourers in Europe? And more than this: I cannot tell one of my boys, 'I don't need your services,' when grown old—the law forbids it, if even I were so inclined. But who would be inclined to part with a boy, even like grumbling Nick yonder, who played with him when a child, whose mother rocked him in the cradle, and whose father taught him the first use of a gun, how to swim, how to catch and ride a horse, and a thousand other things? There may be, and no doubt are, many who feel differently, but speaking for myself, I could *not* part with my negroes, even if assured that the capital invested in them would return me five times as much in ordinary commerce. They receive three suits of clothes every year, and shoes as often as they need: their holidays are fixed by law; in wet weather they are kept within doors; they have good, comfortable cabins, plenty of fuel, and little garden-patches to cultivate for themselves; as for their henroosts, they are better stocked than my own. If I want eggs, or garden-stuff, I buy from them, while Nick yonder, and several other of my boys, have full licence to cut all the timber they desire

into cord-wood, and sell it to steamboats for their own pocket-money. Three of these fellows have sold 400 dols. worth of cord-wood to the boats in one year; many other boys also, and none of the masters ever get a cent for the timber. In fact, I have frequently acted as clerk for them when in the field, and sold hundreds of cords to steamboats—the money being handed over to the black rascals, who trot off to the first show and spend it. I tell you, Tom, you cannot induce one of *my* boys to leave me, at any price. My motto is, ‘If my servants are discontented with all I do for them, let them run off if they choose.’ They always come back again, I notice, and behave better than before.”

“It would seem,” said one, “that the Federals are greatly mistaken in their estimate of the negro. But if they *are* equal to the whites, why do not Northern fanatics give their fair daughters in marriage to them? They talk much of the equality of the races, but tell me, are Hottentots socially your equals? would you be bothered with them as gratuitous servants? I think not. Lincoln, the high-priest of Northern anti-slavery fanatics, has publicly declared to a deputation of coloured folks, that they are ‘unfit to pretend’ to equality, and that the best he could advise them was ‘to go to Africa, their original land, or some other place, and raise settlements for themselves!’ Arguments may be multiplied, but the same conclusion is arrived at, namely, that they are an ‘inferior’ race, and unfitted to cope with the whites. Northern fanatics groan, and say we should instruct them and elevate them. Why do not *they* do so? Is not Sambo *their* servant as well as *mine*?—

and are his coloured servants paid, and fed, and clothed, and provided for in old age as mine are—as mine are *obliged* to be by law? No! When Sambo the waiter loses his robust appearance and solemnity of behaviour, or Nancy the cook grows feeble over pots and pans in the kitchen, they are ‘discharged’—no further responsibility rests with the employer, who has drawn from them all the wear and tear of years. Not so with us. We *must* take care of them—their misdemeanors are visited upon *us*, and disgrace those who own them.

“As for going to church, there are no objections—there *can* be none; and, believe me, my darkies go more frequently than *I* do, and have tri-weekly meetings among themselves. This is encouraged: for the more pious a negro is the better servant he becomes in every sense of the word. If he chooses to leave me, and pay for his hire, he can follow any business that pleases him best. I have now two boys who have so hired themselves from me at 5 dols. per week, who in barbering or blacksmithing make thrice that sum, and have large savings in the bank. Think you I could ‘prevail’ upon either of them to buy their freedom at 1,000 dols. or 1,500 dols. each? Why, they would laugh at the proposition. They know well that as long as they do their duty, I have nothing to say, but protect them against every one; but if they get ‘their back up,’ as we say, put on airs, or disobey, I thrash them as I would my own son.”

“In running off our negroes,” said another, “the Federals are much in the situation of a man who bought an elephant at a sale because it was cheap!—they do not know what to do with Sambo. They make

him work incessantly at breastworks and feed him indifferently; but, as yet, we have done all the ditching ourselves, and Nick yonder laughs when we return to camp wet and hungry. Of the two, he is by far the better off. Do you know that these boys charge 10 cents per piece for washing clothes, and without soap? By Jupiter, they are making money, and I have serious thoughts of entering that business myself. But jokes aside, old Alick, who was offered his free papers for a 300 dollar bill, has made 1,500 dols. this past year, and now does business with a horse and cart, charging his master five prices for everything, the old rogue!

“What the Federals will do with the darkies is difficult to say. When peace is declared they will nearly all return home,—some of them have already escaped from the tender mercies of the Yankee, and are in ‘Dixie’ once again, fully determined to travel away no more. You know Pete? Well, when I was in Canada, the little fool took up a notion that he must be ‘free,’ and accordingly ran off. I did not trouble myself about him, but hired a white boy to wait on me, and found it much more inexpensive. When I was about to return South again, up turns the rogue Pete, and with tears in his eyes begged me to take him home!—he had spent all his money, and found it difficult to live as a ‘free’ man. I know several wealthy darkies in Louisiana—much richer by far than I am—who own plantations and make splendid crops of sugar and cotton. In fact, the free boys of New Orleans raised a battalion 1,500 strong, and offered themselves for service to Davis, but were refused! Their flag had for

motto, 'We never surrender.' Think you one could prevail upon any of *those* fellows to leave home? Freedom, however, does them no good—they have all the vices, but few virtues of the white, and are rather a nuisance to communities than otherwise. The free state of Illinois forbids negroes of any stamp to reside there, under heavy penalties. State legislatures have enacted laws forbidding free darkies to remain in many of the cotton States, for their habits are injurious to the morals of those in servitude. But how do they evade it? Why, rather than leave, and live in free States, ninety-nine out of every hundred bind themselves to masters again for form's sake, and thus remain with us."

"If the negro is really so unhappy as Northern orators proclaim, why do our servants go to battle with us?—how comes it that officers *cannot* keep them from the front? You know as well as I, that Dave behaved gallantly at Manassas, and received his free papers from the State of Mississippi—passed in full legislative style—his price being paid to the owner by the State treasurer; but what did Dave do? He still keeps to his old master as before, and tells him to burn his papers if he chooses, 'he's as free as he wants to be, while old massa libs!' What induces these servants to fight for us? I ask again. Who induced those two boys to leave their pots and pans, and shoulder a musket the other day, and get shot? Not their owners, certainly. What keeps our darkies so quiet and industrious at home, now that we are away, tempted as they are by Lincoln's emissaries? Surely one old white man cannot subdue three thousand blacks if they are

discontented! Why, there are thousands of plantations in the South at this moment with no white person to look after them, save our wives or grandmothers! Do you find darkies shouldering muskets and going forth to fight for Lincoln? In all my observations I never knew of but three negroes who were found in arms for Lincoln, and they were in the 15th Massachusetts, and pretended to be dead when our black boys found them on the battle-field.\* Do you think Nick out there considers a Northern darkey his equal? Tell him so!—you could not insult him more grossly than to insinuate such a thing!”

“There cannot be a doubt,” said another, “that blacks have occasionally been treated very barbarously by owners, but it is against all logic to suppose that any one, let him be ever so brutally inclined, would wilfully cut, maim, or habitually ill-treat, that or those which were to him a source of profit or income. It is the interest of a master to protect and well treat those that augment his riches, and to sustain, improve, and cultivate their physical powers that they may continue to do so, even if State laws, heavy fines, or confiscation of property did not *enforce* it. This may account for the greater longevity of blacks over the whites.

“In our whole army there must be at least 30,000 coloured servants who do nothing but cook and wash—nine-tenths of the ditching falls to *our* share—yet in all these thousands I have yet to hear of more than 100

---

\* This was written before the negro regiments were raised under General Banks at New Orleans.

who have run away from their owners ! This is true, although they are continually moving about with ‘passes’ at all hours, and ten times more frequently than masters : what greater opportunities could be presented for escape ? They are roaming in and out of the lines at all times, tramping over every acre of country daily, and I have not heard of more than six instances of runaways in our whole brigade, which has a cooking and washing corps of negroes at least 150 strong ! Bostick lost one in a singular manner. The boy was sick, and his kind, brave old master gave Joe a ‘pass’ to go to his mistress in Georgia—a thousand miles away—together with 50 dols. for his expenses, and 50 dols. pocket-money—all in gold. Joe went safely as far as Knoxville, when some of Parson Brownlow’s disciples persuaded him to leave the cars, and stay in East Tennessee as a ‘free’ man ! That same night, some of these Abolitionists waylaid the ‘free’ man Joe, their recognized coloured ‘brother,’ robbed him, and then beat his skull in pieces ! Bostick, the ‘slave-holder’—that term which horrifies Northern free-thinkers—paid the best detectives he could procure, to find—heavily fee’d the ablest counsel to prosecute, if found,—and finally offered a reward of 5,000 dols. for the arrest of, the murderers of his slave-boy Joe ! Another boy ran away from our regiment, and crossed over to the enemy ; he found how things were, and returned across the river to ‘Dixie’ again, under a shower of bullets. These are not solitary instances. Examples as much to the point as these might be cited by all.”

“Major Walton, Chief of the Washington (New



Orleans) Artillery Corps, had a boy who ran away," said another, "and the rogue informed the enemy how things stood at Centreville during the winter months of 1861 and 1862. His description of our batteries was pretty accurate as to name and number, but when he attempted to describe their positions and bearings, his head was at fault. I know an instance of a boy who ran from the 18th Mississippi, just before Manassas, July, 1861. He was recaptured during the engagement; for the Yankees putting him in the front, together with other runaways, made him very uneasy, so he slipped into our lines again, but was seized by two coloured men, who observed the manœuvre, and was handed over to his master. His owner refused to see him, and the general wish of our servants was, that he should be hung or shot for a traitor! He was given over to them, and met a death at their hands more violent than any white person's anger could have suggested. Incidents of this kind, however illustrative of the coloured people's loyalty to the South, are too numerous and tedious for enumeration.

"Northern fanatics use the opening clause of the old Declaration of Independence, and say, 'All men are free and equal.' They pervert the true meaning of what Jefferson wrote, but if they believe it, in its widest sense, as they preach, why do not opulent Abolitionists equally divide their riches with negroes who brush boots? Jefferson was a scholar, a gentleman, and a Virginian, and could not mean it to apply in a social sense, or otherwise his own, and every other Southern State, would have seceded at that early day. It is

from a wrong, fanatical construction put upon these words that Abolitionism has grown so rampant in the North, and been converted into an instrument for securing place and favour, and therewith the emoluments of office. If 'all men are free and equal' in the sense they pretend, the Hottentot, Aztec, Digger Indian, Cannibal, and Barbarian are our brothers, and should eat, drink, intermarry, and share riches with us.

"True, in a spiritual sense, 'all men *are* free and equal;' each has a soul of immortal price to save, and the servant may rise higher than his master in spirituality—which many undoubtedly do. Against this we have nothing to say. But even here we see there is some kind of 'inequality,' or all men would be born under the Christian dispensation, and not require the labours of missionaries. One soul is equal to another before its Creator only in so far as each fulfils the law prescribed for it, but in every other sense the idea is a profound absurdity.

"Test the assertion that all are born equal in a social sense by a practical illustration. Does the black butler North marry his employer's daughter? Such an idea would turn the head of Lincoln himself! Or fancy a Northern cotton-spinner telling the poor boys and girls who work over seventy hours in the week for some three or four dollars of wages, that 'all men are born free and equal!' Would he not be amazed to find his poor emaciated employes demanding an equal partition of his profits? The difference of Capital and Labour is well understood by Yankees when it affects

themselves ; but although they eat sugar, rice, molasses, and grow rich from the produce of slave-labour, without the slightest qualm of conscience, they treat the negro, when amongst them, as absolutely below the relationship of consanguinity and social rights—yet insist that *we* are barbarians for treating them *more* humanely, because not admitting their chimerical absurdities regarding the abstract questions of human freedom. We are all slaves in some degree. Sovereign to sovereign, and man to man—it is in courts as it is on plantations ; place holds its head above place, power above power, merit above demerit. There are inferior and superior animals ; there are angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim, all of God's ordaining ; but while all harmonize in the grand conceptions of an all-powerful, all-wise Creator, talent and merit can always break the bonds of class, or of sphere, and ascend higher and higher for ever !

“Did you ever remark our servants on a march ? They make me laugh. Soon as the word ‘march’ is whispered abroad, these fellows bundle up their traps, and get them into the waggons, by some sort of sleight of hand, for I know that my baggage with ‘little tricks’ added, far outweighs the authorized sixty pounds—a captain's allowance. After safely stowing away all they can, the cooks shoulder some large bundle of curiosities of their own, and with a saucepan, skillet, or frying-pan, all march some fifty yards in front of the band, whistling and singing, forming in regular or irregular files, commanded by some big black rogue, who with a stick and a loud voice enforces discipline

among his heavy-heeled corps. And thus they proceed far ahead, monopolizing all attention as we pass through towns and villages, grinning and singing as they go, and frequently dressed up in the full regimentals of some unfortunate Yankee or other. They scour the country far and wide for chickens, milk, butter, eggs, and bread, for which they pay little or nothing; always stoutly swearing they have expended all ‘massa’ gave them, and unblushingly asking for more. Why, sir, I am positive Nick and our other boys beg or steal half they pretend to purchase; and yet do not fail to charge us, the ‘cruel masters,’ five times the ordinary value of the articles. Such is the wastefulness of these fellows, that our pay of 130 dols. per month does not begin to furnish the table as they would have it even for their own eating. The other day I gave Andy 10 dols. for market-money, and the wretch brought me back two antiquated hens, and a pound of fresh butter, ‘without a cent to spare,’ as he solemnly swore! There is no such thing as making one joint serve twice—it doesn’t suit them; and if you preach economy, the villains grumble without end, and think you are stingy, or what is worse, whisper that ‘Massa’s gettin’ like de Yankees, now he’s up Norf!’”

“There’s Benton yonder, singing a song among the pots,” said another; “for two months he regularly went over the fields to Dr. Edward’s, and asked for milk and butter ‘for the sick,’ and on returning to camp sold the former at 1 dol. 50 cents per gallon, and the butter at 1 dol. per pound! His master was enraged when informed of it, and made his hide tingle, for he is well

treated and has enough to spend. Besides, these fellows not only cook for us, but hire themselves out to different messes, and what with charging the poor boys ten cents each for washing a pair of socks or a handkerchief, bartering, buying whisky at 5 dols. per gallon, and retailing it at 50 cents each drink of one-eighth pint, they are making lots of money, and frequently loan it out at heavy interest.

"I received a letter a few days ago which informed me that the darkies of Vicksburg gave a ball, and realizing 1,000 dols., handed it over 'for de boys in Varginny!'—for *us* their 'inhuman masters,' as Northern cant will have it. Not only in Mississippi, but the coloured folks of every town in the South have given balls, parties, and fairs, for our benefit, and sent thousands of dollars, clothes, blankets, shoes, &c. for 'young massa and de boys.' In truth our servants feel as much pride in this holy war as we do, and are ever ready, as we have frequently seen, to prove in battle 'dat de Soufern coloured man can whip a Norfern nigger and de Yankee to back him!'"

"Until the present," said Frank, "I never thought our boys possessed half so much spirit as they do. Fight! why, you might as well endeavour to keep ducks from water as attempt to hold in the cooks of our company, when firing or fighting is on hand. In fact, an order has been frequently issued to keep darkies to the rear in time of battle, but although I lectured my boy about it, I was surprised to find him behind me at Manassas, rifle in hand, shouting out, 'Go in, massa! give it to 'em, boys! now you've got 'em, and give 'em h—ll!'"

“There was a very old, gray-haired cook in an Alabama regiment,” Jenkins remarked, “who *would* follow his young master to the war, and had the reputation of a saint among the coloured boys of the brigade; and as he could read the Bible, and was given to preaching, he invariably assembled the darkies on Sunday afternoon and held meetings in the woods. He used to lecture them unmercifully, but could not keep them from singing and dancing after ‘tattoo.’ Uncle Pompey, as he was called, was an excellent servant, and an admirable cook, and went on from day to day singing hymns among his pots round the camp-fire, until the battle of ‘Seven Pines’ opened, when the regiment moved up to the front, and was soon engaged.

“Uncle Pompey, contrary to orders, persisted in going also, but was met by another darkie, who asked, ‘Whar’s *you* gwine, uncle Pomp? You isn’t gwine up dar to have all de har scorched off yer head, is you?’ Uncle Pompey still persisted in advancing, and shouldering a rifle soon overtook his regiment. ‘De Lor’ hab marcy on us all, boys! here dey comes agin! take car, massa, and hole your rifle square, as I showed you in de swamp! Dar it is,’ he exclaimed as the Yankees fired and over-shot, ‘just as I taught! can’t shoot worth a bad five-cent piece! Now’s de time, boys!’ and as the Alabamians returned a withering volley and closed up with the enemy, charging them furiously, uncle Pompey forgot all about his church, his ministry, and sanctity, and while firing and dodging, as best he could, was heard to shout out, ‘Pitch in, white folks—uncle Pomp’s behind yer. Send all de Yankees to de ’ternal flames,

whar dere's weeping and gnashing of—sail in Alabamy; stick 'em wid de bayonet, and send all de blue ornary cusses to de state ob eternal fire and brimstone! Push 'em hard, boys!—push 'em hard; and when dey's gone, may de Lor' hab marcy on de last one on 'em, and send dem to h—l farder nor a pigin kin fly in a month! Stick de d—d sons of ——! don't spar none on 'em, for de good Lor' neber made such as dem, no how you kin fix it; for it am said in de two-eyed chapter of de one-eyed John, somewhar in Collusions, dat——Hurray, boys! dat's you, sure—now you've got 'em; give 'em goss! show 'em a taste of ole Alabamy!' &c. The person who saw Uncle Pompey," added Jenkins, "was wounded and sat behind a tree, but said, although his hurt was extremely painful, the eloquence, rage, and impetuosity of Pomp, as he loaded and fired rapidly, was so ludicrous, being an incoherent jumble of oaths, snatches of Scripture, and prayers, that the tears ran down his cheeks, and he burst out into a roar of laughter."\*

---

\* Among the incidents of battle near Richmond, the following amusing scene is said to have occurred near the Mechanicsville road. The 8th and 9th Georgia were ordered out to repel the enemy, when, upon the men falling in, one of the 9th stepped from the ranks and told the captain "he wasn't able to face the music." "You are scared," said the captain; "lay down your gun and accoutrements, and retire, sir." The chicken-hearted gentleman did so, when shortly afterwards there stepped forward a good-looking darkey, named Westley, well known in camp, who asked permission to put on the deserted accoutrements and shoulder his gun. The request being granted, Westley followed the company into action, and though the shells and Minié balls of the enemy were falling thick and fast about him, Westley never wavered, but brought down a Yankee at every fire. Such a deed is worthy of remembrance, and should inspire our soldiery with tenfold energy and courage, if possible, for if servants will do this, what may not be accomplished by the master?

“Their devotion to dead or wounded masters,” said another, “has been exhibited on so many trying occasions, that allusion to it may be unnecessary: but I have seen examples of it, which were never exhibited by brothers or relations. They would search for whole nights and days for a wounded master, and pull off their own coats to keep him warm, tear up their shirts for bandages, and in lieu of a stretcher, carry him to hospital on their backs! Nor did danger terrify them. Directly the fact was known that ‘Massa’ had fallen, the hunt for him immediately commenced, whether the action was over or not: and I have seen several instances where the poor boys have been wounded while dragging their masters out of action. At present, little notice is taken of these things, for matters of greater importance attract attention, but it cannot be that acts of such self-sacrifice and devotion will escape notice in times to come. Although more bother, expense, and anxiety than they are worth, I am sure that old associations are so strong, we would not part with our negro servants for any price. In sickness they are ever watchful for our safety, as in the hour of danger; and many a score of boys have I seen weeping by the road-side, when it was known master had fallen.

“The stories our boys send home about the war are vastly amusing. Some of the young soldiers frequently write for them: a few nights ago, while I was reading, Sergeant Smith in the next tent to me was good-naturedly writing an epistle to the wife of Yellow Jim, who stood by, dictating what to say. ‘Tell her, Massa Smif, ef yer please, dat I’s e gettin on blazing, dat de



Yanks is scared an' won't fight. Tell her I'se gwine to save all my money, an' will bring home lots of tings from de battle fiel. Tell her I'se got a big shell what fell among de dishes todder day, and dat when it busted, it knocked de turkey an' soup higher dan a kite—which it did : but *dis* chile wasn't on hand about dat time, for he heern it screechin' an' comin' along, an' he just lay low behin' a big oak, four feet thick ! but you needna tell her dat, Massa Smif, kase she mought tink I was one ob dem scary darkies, which eberybody knows is a lie ; for I woughpt big black Bill todder ebenin' in less nor no time, Massa Smif, an' made dat black nigger's head bigger dan de soup-kettle—ask all de boys ef I didn't ! And tell her, Massa Smif, ef *you* please, dat de kernal and all de big boys sez I'm de best cook on de place, 'cept *your* nigger, Massa Smif. And tell her, I'se been totin' about a whul lot o' tings for her, an' has a Yankee gineral's clothes which I'se gwine to ware de fust time I sees her ; and say I sends 'spects to ole massa and all de folks up to de house, an' dat young massa hasn't woughpt me neary once since I'se been in ole Virginny, and says he's goin' to give me my 'papers' when de war is over, if I wants to. You needn't tell her, Massa Smif, dat de guard put me in de Calaboose for getting tight, for young massa's been in dere twice for the same ting. Anybody gets tight once in a while,' &c."

## CHAPTER V.

June—Jackson in the Valley—Shields and Fremont—Battle of “Cross Keys”—Ashby killed—Battle of “Port Republic”—End of the Valley Campaign, and Rout of the Enemy.

*“Charlottesville, June 20th, 1862.*

“DEAR FRIEND,—In my last I informed you that before Jackson left Page Valley to attack Banks’s rear in the Shenandoah, Shields had already left, and gone eastwards across the Blue Ridge, towards Fredericksburg; also, that Fremont was across the Alleghanies, with Milroy and Blenker, too distant to afford Banks any support, so that we were enabled to attack him with impunity. You will remember that Banks, after his rout, crossed the Potomac, and that our army remained in possession of the immense booty we had taken. I will now relate the events that followed.

“Jackson was now anxiously watching the movements of Shields and Fremont, who from the east and west might cross the mountains, re-enter the valley, and cut off his retreat. We had not lain idle more than a week, when it became known that both those commanders had turned the heads of their respective columns towards Strasburg, *fifty miles to our rear*, and were rapidly marching to that point, thinking that,

should they reach there in time, we might be compelled to accept battle from their joint forces (30,000) or surrender at discretion. Thus menaced, it was obviously necessary for Jackson to hurry on his movements, and he did so with more than usual expedition. Having destroyed all the baggage that could not be transported, he turned his column towards Strasburg, and commenced a backward movement in the last days of May. The roads were in fair condition, and marching very rapidly, we drew near the town on the third day. Little rest was allowed, and all pushed forward with remarkable celerity.

“As we approached Strasburg, our advance cavalry were opposed by the enemy on the Pike, and were positively informed that Shields and Fremont were already there. These commanders, however, had not formed a junction, but were in sight of each other—the first named on the east, and the latter on the west side of the Shenandoah River, which at this point is not very wide. So long as they had not joined their forces Jackson cared but little, feeling confident of soundly thrashing either of them; indeed, he would not have hesitated to attack both had they stopped his march. We had destroyed all the bridges in our route, and as Fremont could not well attack us on the flank, and Shields was doomed to be a spectator for want of bridges to cross, Jackson boldly marched forward, drove in Fremont's Dutch cavalry, took up a position between two mountains, and offered battle to Fremont, or to both, should they choose to join forces for that purpose. Fremont was mortified to find Jackson so

strongly posted, and as he could not be flanked, and his troops were unreliable for a desperate attack in front, he deferred all movements for a few hours, hoping that in the meantime Shields could devise means for crossing.

“Those few hours’ delay were ruinous to both Federal commanders, for during the night Jackson decamped, and in the morning Shields and Fremont looked in vain for him. The weather now proved unfavourable for fast marching, and rain began to pour in torrents, rendering the roads impassable. Still, onward pushed our army down the Pike, as hard as mortals could go; for there was no doubt our successes and escapes had greatly exasperated the enemy, and, numerous as they were, and perfectly fresh, they would leave nothing undone to overtake and punish us, *if they could*. Dashing along the muddy roads as best we might, Ashby and his cavalry in the rear skirmishing and bridge-burning, we endeavoured to reach Mount Jackson, that point being considered a place of safety. It was surmised by some that Shields might push through Page Valley and appear in front, while Fremont followed up the rear; and this he might have done, had he been daring enough to attempt it. Still marching as fast as possible, our wearied force at last reached the vicinity of a small village called Edinburg, and, crossing the Shenandoah, burned the bridge. We were now not far from Mount Jackson; but the army was so fatigued with its long march over a muddy, rough, and hilly country, that a ‘halt’ was absolutely necessary. Fremont’s pursuit was completely

checked by the destruction of the bridge; and, as a further precaution, while the infantry were resting several miles beyond, Ashby's cavalry watched the banks.

“The Federals were greatly disappointed to find the bridge gone, but manfully began to rebuild it. This was a work of several days—a respite gratefully improved by our exhausted men; but it becoming known that the enemy had again crossed, and were in pursuit, our main army took up the line of march towards Harrisonburg, while Ashby, as usual, was in the rear with his cavalry. The enemy were far superior to us in horse—they were more numerous, and their animals in excellent condition, so that it required great exertions on the part of Ashby to check their determined onslaughts. Every rise in the road was seized by our men, and held as long as practicable; each patch of timber concealed some of our horsemen, so that although the enemy evinced more ardour and courage than ever witnessed before, our frequent ambuscades cost them dearly. From early morning until evening, all along the route, cavalry skirmishing was incessant, so that Ashby's regiment of 1,000 men was completely broken down with fatigue.

“As we neared Harrisonburg, evening was fast approaching, and the column turned towards ‘Brown's Gap.’ The enemy seemed to understand the importance of this movement, and pushed our rear-guard more fiercely than ever. Our cavalry had charged the enemy, and driven their horsemen upon the infantry; but a full brigade came galloping forward, and we

retired. The brigade of Ashby now came up, and, with loud shouts, attacked the Yankees and completely routed them, killing and wounding many, capturing several; among the latter their brigadier-general, a fine, soldierly, and handsome Englishman, named Windham. This officer loudly cursed his command in unmeasured terms for cowardice, swearing roundly that he would never serve with them again; for although he had been urging them forward the whole day, and personally leading, he could make nothing of them.

“Finding that the enemy’s infantry were near at hand, Ashby sent information to Ewell, who soon counter-marched three regiments, and made dispositions for attack. The enemy deployed their men right and left of the road, and advancing through the woods some distance without opposition, commenced cheering lustily. Several open fields intervened, and their ‘Bucktail Rifles’ (Pennsylvania Reserve Corps) came forward in fine style; but as they approached a strip of woods, on each side the road, our infantry rose up, and delivered a volley full in their faces, and charged upon them. They broke and ran, and while doing so, out rushed Ashby’s cavalry, and overtaking them in open ground, cut and thrust without mercy, driving them in confusion upon their reserves. It was now so dark that, afraid of further ambuscades, the enemy halted, and we continued our retreat.

“I have now a sad event to relate. While Ashby was leading the 1st Maryland infantry in a successful charge, an enemy concealed in the bushes, and favoured

by darkness, took deliberate aim and mortally wounded him. Judge of the universal grief when this was known. Ashby, the chivalric cavalry leader, loved by all, to close his immortal career by the shot of an unseen enemy! Alas, my friend, this was a sad blow to us, and to our cause, for he was the ablest and most dashing officer in the service—gentle and kind, brave to rashness, idolized by all ranks, and feared by all enemies.\* The rest of our march was a melancholy

---

\* A friend of mine published the following regarding the last day of Ashby's life :—"It was a busy one. Scarcely had he ordered his baggage train to proceed before the enemy opened fire upon his camp. With but two companies of his old cavalry he prepared to meet them; seeing this, they immediately withdrew. The command was then moved slowly through Harrisonburg, and drawn up 300 yards from the opposite end. Soon a regiment of 'blue coats' came charging it through town, around the bend, in full sight of Ashby's men, who stood as if fixed to the ground. When within a short distance the enemy's horse began to slacken their speed, only giving us time to render the salute due them. Soon their ranks were broken, and in confusion they fled through the streets.

"Never before had I heard our noble general utter such a shout. It was not one caused by victory over a brave foe after a hard contested fight, but only seemed designed to shame an ignominious band for running before they were hurt. We had begun to entertain a high opinion of this body of cavalry. In one instance it flanked and charged upon a battery, which was left without a support—a most daring feat for them. (Here Gen. A. stood by the guns, fired every load from his three pistols, and brought everything away safely.) Soon we were moving along the road to Port Republic, the enemy pressing closely. Ashby's eagle eye was upon them, as watching for an excuse to give them battle. An excuse, and even the necessity for a fight, soon became evident.

"The road was very bad, the train moved slowly, and the main body of the enemy's cavalry was only a mile from its rear. They gave us no time to prepare to meet them. Ashby had but begun to form his men, before three regiments, with colours flying and bands playing, emerged from a wood three-quarters of a mile distant. Bearing to our right, they charged, presenting a beautiful sight. Ashby could contain himself no longer. Gently drawing his sabre, and waving it around his head, his

one. We had beaten back the enemy, it is true; but not a thousand such successful combats could compensate for the untimely death of our beloved and gentle Ashby; meek as a child in peace, fierce as a tiger in battle, night and day in the saddle, ever restless and watchful, always in advance when danger

---

dear-sounding voice rang out his only command—'Follow me.' The clash was simultaneous. Fences were cleared which at any other time would have been thought impossible. The enemy came to a halt. It was but for a moment. As they heard the strange whizz of the sabre round their heads, they broke and ran. The work of slaughter commenced. At every step Ashby, followed closely by his men, cut them down, or sent them to the rear. For two miles and a half the chase continued, and became more bloody at every step. Never before did our general or his men use their sabres so unsparingly. None but those who have witnessed a similar scene can imagine the spectacle. Enraged by deeds too horrible to mention, led by a general whose presence exerted a mystic influence over every heart, the bravery of the men knew no limit, and seldom was a summons to surrender heard. The scattered fragments of the three regiments hid themselves behind their column of infantry three miles beyond the point of attack; and the pursuit ended not until his infantry opened fire. Here Ashby drew up his men, and remained beneath their fire, and waited for reinforcements from Jackson. We took forty-four prisoners—among them the colonel commanding the brigade of cavalry. The infantry having arrived, Generals Ashby, Swell, and Stewart (of Maryland) led them to the fight. Here A.'s gallantry could not have been excelled. Having led the 1st Maryland Regiment in a charge, which sent the enemy flying from that quarter, he sought the 58th Virginia, and still between the two fires he ordered the charge. His horse fell dead; he arose, beckoned to the men, and whilst in the very act, a ball entered low in his left side, came out near the right breast, and shattered his right wrist. Falling mortally wounded, not even a groan or a sigh was uttered by the dying hero. He was brave whilst living, braver still in death. The men were not discouraged, but pressed on, and soon the victory was ours. Night closed the fighting. The noble Ashby fell between six and seven in the evening. The news went like a flash through our lines. Every heart was wounded. The aged, the young, and hard-hearted wept. Nature made deeper the gloom; and soon the darkness of the night made still darker the regions of the mind. He now sleeps in the University Burying Ground, near Charlottesville."



threatened. To see him ride to the front in the crisis of battle, and, waving his sword, shout out, '*Follow me!*' was a sight which none will forget who witnessed it. Gentle, good, kind, Christian, heroic soldier, a host in himself—may he rest his honoured head in peace, and posterity honour his name for his countless acts of daring and chivalry!

“Having retreated during the night, we halted two miles from the village of Port Republic, and watched a further development of the enemy's plans. Shields' division was on the east, and Fremont's on the west side of the Shenandoah river, nearly parallel, and it seemed the latter was desirous of attacking Jackson while Shields should cross the bridge at Port Republic and get in the rear: the commanders were in sight of each other, and not more than two miles apart. But if they imagined that Jackson would be so silly as to leave the bridge unguarded on his right flank and rear, they were egregiously mistaken; our commander having made it his first object to secure and cover the bridge with artillery, but so concealed that only a few infantry were visible to the enemy. Next morning (June 7th) Fremont slowly advanced, and cavalry skirmishing was incessant all day, but with little effect on either side. The Federal commander wished to draw out Jackson from the bridge, and a fine position he had taken; but that crafty leader laughed at him and remained where he was, so that if the enemy were determined to fight, an advance was the only course left open to them.

“The advantage gained by fast marching is here apparent, for had we been less active, Shields would

have advanced up the east bank of the river, and, having secured the bridge at Port Republic, would have crossed over, and got in front. It was fortunate, therefore, that Jackson had been able to outrace them, and arrive first. On the evening of the 7th, after cavalry had ceased skirmishing for the day, I ascended a hill, and had a fine view of Fremont's and Shields' commands. They were then abreast of each other, on different sides of the river, but made no disposition for uniting, nor had any bridges been begun for that purpose, while we hugged the west bank in close proximity to the bridge, and waited for Fremont, whose advance had already begun. During the night of the 7th, scouts came in and informed us that Fremont had marched two miles towards us, and was drawn up in line of battle at a place called Cross Keys. It was not a village; there were no more than half-a-dozen houses scattered around, and all that gave it a name was a rude country church and cemetery.

“On the morning of the 8th, we were already prepared for them, but nothing more than heavy artillery fire took place, and many imagined that nothing of importance would transpire. In the afternoon, however, infantry skirmishing brought on a fierce engagement, and for a time the fight was hot and heavy. We had not more than seven thousand engaged, and they about ten thousand; and, although we rapidly gained ground, they manœuvred so well that we accomplished little. Artillery fire was fierce on both sides, and several houses were quickly destroyed by our joint efforts, for, being finely placed, each was afraid

of the other occupying them. During the engagement in a little valley, it was discovered that Shields' cavalry advance was endeavouring to surprise and capture the bridge, and had already driven away our infantry; but when the head of their column appeared intent on crossing, several guns opened on them with grape and canister, killing and maiming dozens at every discharge. Finding it impossible to force a passage Shields withdrew two miles down the river, and left Fremont to fight his own battle.

"As night approached, events were progressing favourably for us; we had driven the enemy from the field, and had pursued them more than a mile, capturing many prisoners, and small arms; but as another, and a fiercer battle was in store, Jackson halted, hurriedly buried his dead, and secured his prisoners; and finding that Fremont had fallen back to Harrisonburg, a distance of three miles, determined to attack Shields on the other side of the river. His entire force having crossed about midnight, and his baggage-train being safe on its way towards Charlottesville, Jackson destroyed the bridge, and prepared his men for the battle of Port Republic, which was to take place early in the morning, drawing up his lines as close as possible to the enemy. As the sun rose I observed that Shields' force was admirably posted between two hills, his wings being much higher than the centre, with artillery on the hill sides to strengthen them. They occupied, in fact, the corner of a valley; and it seemed impossible to flank them, mountains being on their left and the river on the right. Their guns, also,

were all admirably disposed, and had full command of every approach, so that when heavy skirmishing opened at 8 A.M., it seemed evident to many that although we were of equal force, except in artillery, it would prove a tough and sanguinary experiment before the enemy could be dislodged from their stronghold; add to this, they held the road for retreat, and could destroy every man of us, should we endeavour to follow them between the mountains.

“Nothing daunted, and assured that Fremont was unwilling, were he able, to cross and join commands, Jackson opened the fight with great vigour, being determined to close his brilliant Valley campaign with a signal victory over his old enemy. Afraid to move forward from the mountains, Tyler (for Shields was absent) seemed content to stay where he was, and would not meet us in open ground, so that we suffered somewhat in approaching him. Several attempts were made to turn his flanks, and capture the guns, without success, yet in every instance where they advanced, our troops immediately rushed to the attack with loud yells, and drove the enemy back with slaughter. Again and again, we used every possible stratagem to draw them, and when all failed, we pushed up in front, determined to bring the affair to a finish.

“While pushing them severely in front and attracting attention by the vigour of our attack, a small force was sent along the mountain side on their flank, which suddenly charging down in the rear, filled the wing with consternation; at the same time a body of chosen troops, bent on death or glory, rushed up hill on the

opposite wing, and after a sharp and sanguinary encounter, seized the guns. The effect of these daring and successful movements was electrical. Finding both wings broken and showers of small shot assailing the centre, the enemy rallied and endeavoured to dispossess us, but in a struggle of infantry against infantry the result ceased to be doubtful. As soon as the enemy appeared in line, to renew the combat on the wings, our men there raised a terrific yell, and advancing at the "double quick" dodged the enemy's volley, and rushing into them with the bayonet, drove them in confusion on the centre, which Jackson was now assailing with every disposable man, shot and shell flying over us, and dealing destruction on the enemy.

Tyler perceived that all was over, that his troops were thoroughly beaten, and could not be rallied, and now fought desperately to keep open the road for retreat. The destruction was immense, for crowded as they were, every shot told with marked effect, and such was the panic that seized them, hundreds scattered over the hills, while in the distance our cavalry might be seen in every direction charging on the hill-sides far above the battle-field. The battle had raged from 8 A.M. until past noon, and the field presented a harrowing sight as we pushed forward in pursuit. Five or six pieces of artillery, thousands of small arms, dozens of waggons filled with stores, many ambulances, twelve waggon-loads of ammunition, hundreds of prisoners, several standards, tents, camp equipage, horses, pistols, sabres—all were scattered about as we rushed forward in the chase, and such

was the ardour of our men that their vengeance seemed insatiable, while an enemy remained in sight.

“But the most singular incident of the day was Fremont’s behaviour. Hearing that we had crossed to the east side of the river, and were thrashing Shields’ command, he formed his division and marched from Harrisonburg towards the scene, and finding the bridge gone, began shelling across in all directions; this he continued doing for several hours, so that many who were burying the enemy’s dead were killed or maimed. White flags were displayed, but this heroic gentleman would not respect our labours, but continued firing without intermission long after the fight had closed! How very valiant this was!\*

“When night closed in we found that our killed and wounded amounted to 300, and that of the enemy to 1,000, not counting the fight of Cross Keys, where our loss was 300, and that of Fremont 500.

“Thus ended Jackson’s memorable campaign in the Valley, a chapter in history which is without parallel, but though the majority think that these movements were all his own, it may not be so. He was constantly in receipt of orders from Lee, and he faithfully obeyed them. No man in the army is half so obedient as old ‘Stonewall,’ or so determined to be obeyed; the result is, that no army has shown greater endurance,

---

\* General Patterson, in a recent speech at Philadelphia, gave Fremont’s character in brief. He declared that he was “a statesman without a speech, a soldier without a battle, and a millionaire with ‘nary red.’” He could only abbreviate the description by calling him an unmitigated humbug. His staff usually comprised nearly sixty officers.

marched farther, fought more frequently, suffered less, or done half the work that has fallen to our lot. Our men seem to know intuitively the designs of their commanders, and they second them without a murmur. Where we are marching to now, I cannot form the least idea, but as we move eastward, it is whispered that we go to Charlottesville to recruit, and after being heavily reinforced, may re-enter the Valley again, and perhaps push for Maryland. All at present is profound mystery, but I am sincerely rejoiced at the prospect of some little rest.

“ A messenger starts to-night across country for Richmond, and I hurriedly close to send by him.—  
Yours,

“ ASHTON.”

## CHAPTER VI.

June—Stuart's famous Raid round M'Clellan's Lines before Richmond—  
 —Cowardice of the Enemy—Incidents at each Stage of the March—  
 Gallantry of a young Lady—Attack on a Railway Train—Appropriation of M'Clellan's Stores—Return to Camp with Booty and Prisoners—Sketch of General Stuart—Affair at Drainsville—General Joe Johnson.

FROM the preparations in progress it was apparent that operations would soon recommence on a scale far surpassing anything hitherto attempted. Longstreet and Hill on our right, on the Charles City road, made frequent reconnaissances towards the interior and the river to ascertain the enemy's strength and position on their left wing. M'Clellan never opposed these movements, and was possibly unconscious of them, for they were chiefly made at night, or in unpropitious weather, when our generals would frequently sally forth on a march of ten miles and return almost without the knowledge of the main body of the army.

By these movements Lee had satisfied himself of M'Clellan's true position on our right, and felt convinced he possessed but few and unimportant depôts on the James River, or the Chickahominy; but had established communication with the York River to his right and rear, as being safer to navigate, some con-



siderable distance nearer to his head-quarters, and affording greater facility of transportation by the York River railroad, which ran through the centre of his lines. The Brook Church, or Hanover Court-house turnpike (leading from Richmond to Hanover Court-house, the White House on the Pamunkey River, and West Point on the York River), was M'Clellan's right, situated in a fine, open, undulating country, highly cultivated and picturesque. This turnpike was the extreme left of our lines, and chiefly held by cavalry, and a few pieces of artillery, placed in several fine redoubts sweeping all approach. To ascertain the enemy's position, resources, and force through this line of country, seemed to be an absorbing thought with General Lee, and although the army was not up to the standard he desired, and unfit for immediate offensive operations, he felt desirous of ascertaining beyond all doubt what M'Clellan had done in seizing upon the natural positions of the country, establishing depôts, obstructing old or forming new roads, &c.

Unknown to any, Brigadier-General J. E. B. Stuart received orders and prepared a small force to make an incursion upon M'Clellan's rear, and inform himself as far as practicable upon all the points mentioned. Selecting parts of the 1st Virginia Cavalry (Colonel FitzHugh Lee, son of our chief), 9th Va. Cavalry (Colonel FitzHugh Lee, nephew of our chief), four pieces of Stuart's flying artillery, and four companies of the Jeff. Davis mounted legion, all proceeded down the Branch turnpike, on Wednesday evening, and bivouacked in the woods. From scouts, out several

days before, it was ascertained that the enemy had a strong force of cavalry quartered on the proposed route, and that a fight would be inevitable. Rising with the sun, Stuart, with his 1,400 men, dashed along the roads, and as the enemy's pickets were unable to tell what the immense cloud of dust meant which they descried in the distant landscape, our force actually rode through one of their cavalry encampments before the alarm was given. The enemy were for the most part absent at the time, and sustained but little loss save the total destruction of their stores, the capture of their spare horses, and a few prisoners. These latter, being mounted, were placed in charge of the rear-guard, and the excursion proceeded.

The delay at this camp had given the enemy warning, and when Stuart progressed some miles farther, several squadrons of United States' Dragoons were observed drawn up on a slope ready to receive him. A halt was sounded, two squadrons were sent forward, who dashed upon the enemy at full gallop. The Federals remained long enough to discharge their revolvers, and not attempting to charge down hill, broke and fled precipitously. Their officers were the last to retire, and seemed disgusted with the poltroons they commanded. A few accoutrements, pistols, and horses, were found here and in a neighbouring camp, and Stuart and his men dashed forward on his equestrian excursion, as gaily as ever.

They had proceeded but a few miles when a strong body of the enemy was discovered admirably posted, with skirmishers thrown out in front. Our advance,

consisting of one squadron, went ahead, drove in the outposts, and rode in full view of the enemy, five squadrons strong, and attempted to draw them out. The Federal commander, not observing our whole force screened in woods a mile distant, sallied forth to exterminate our advance. The latter, however, returned up the hill, and over it, and when half-way down were joined by another squadron; both advanced again, and met the enemy advancing up on the other side. Latane gave the word, and our horsemen, spurring their steeds into a maddening gallop, charged among the enemy, and were sabreing and pistolling right and left before they fully recovered from their astonishment. The conflict was hand to hand, and conspicuous in our foremost ranks were an Englishman and a Prussian (captains of Dragoons), who had volunteered on Stuart's staff. The fight lasted about ten minutes, and ended in the flight of the Federals, who dispersed in all directions, and took no heed of their trumpets sounding the "rally."

As our men pushed forward down into the level plain they were again attacked by a fresh body of horse; but a third squadron coming to our assistance made the combat more equal, and finally routed them with loss. We captured many prisoners, a lot of fine horses, sabres, trumpets, and pistols, together with their well-provisioned camps found a half-mile farther on, with all things as their owners had left them; among other articles, lots of superior saddles and harness were immediately appropriated; other things were burned.

Having refreshed his men, and remounted many,

Stuart continued his career; everywhere he was cheered on by the country people, who, informed of events by the frightened Yankees, lined the roadside waving their hats and handkerchiefs in high glee. "I told 'em you'd come along one of these fine mornings!" said a fine old gentleman, standing at his door with two daughters, and shaking with laughter. "Take care of my son Harry, general, and drive all the skunks into the river!" "Hurry on, boys, hurry on; the varmint ain't more nor a mile ahead—we're all Union (!) down here, you know!—one of their camps is just over the hill, and has lots of horses. Darn 'em! Go in, boys, give 'em h—ll!" "Hold on, colonel," said a fine young girl, with a gun in her hand, "I've got four of the rascals in the house; they thought to hide until you passed, but seeing our boys coming I made them deliver up their weapons, and stood guard till you arrived!"\* Sure enough the Federals were there, but were soon accommodated with horses, and being placed in charge of the rear-guard, on went the column again; clouds of dust rising on every hand, and artillery jingling along the roads. Negroes on fences, negroes on door-steps and wood-piles, others at the plough or spade—all rushed forward, yelling and clapping hands like madmen. "Pile in on 'em, Massa Jeb; we ain't no Yankees down dese diggins—fotch it to 'em, white folks, and make 'em clar out ob ole Virginny; we want none ob 'em among dese chickens." Such were their

---

\* The young lady mentioned, whose name I now forget, is a distant relation of the immortal Washington.

acclamations as we passed on in our circuit of the country.

As the whole rear of M'Clellan's army was by this time fully alarmed by fugitives flying in all directions, it would have been madness in Stuart to have followed the usual roads in its vicinity: accordingly he pushed towards the routes of their depôts on the Pamunkey, near the White House, and intercepted large waggon trains approaching, laden with stores of every description, and destroyed them. The horses and mules were entrusted to the rear-guard, and so proceedings continued; waggon trains being seized on all the roads leading to depôts and head-quarters, and burned; their guards and drivers accommodated with spare horses, and sent to our rear. On approaching villages, all United States' property was burned; among the prisoners seized, several army surgeons, captains, quartermasters, commissaries, and other officers, were obliged to mount mules and follow us, much to their astonishment and chagrin.

Approaching Tunstall's station on the York River railroad, the command was divided, to scour all the roads, with orders to meet at a designated rendezvous. Several schooners espied at anchor on the Pamunkey were seized and burned, together with their valuable cargoes of clothing and stores, but several others slipped cables and escaped. Some half-dozen waggon yards, with scores of vehicles of all kinds, were fired, and the teamsters added to our list of prisoners. Plans were laid for capturing the afternoon military train then due at Tunstall's: soon the locomotive was heard approach-

ing, and time not sufficing to tear up any portion of the track, troopers lined the sides of the road, and were ordered to take deadly aim at the engineer. Some of our men commenced firing when the engine was fully a hundred yards distant; but the driver turned on extra steam, and rushing past the station, shoved off several logs placed on the rails. Many of the passengers, to escape the hailstorm of shot, jumped off the train and were crippled. Some few ran to the woods, but were picked up by our men, together with many who ran from the station on our first approach. All were taken, but the train escaped, although many on it were killed or wounded; the cars being for the most part uncovered, or freight trucks. The gallant fellow who drove the engine was also killed by an accurate shot: his bravery and foresight deserved a better fate.

Continuing their raid in all directions, the detached parties destroyed United States' property to the amount of several million dollars, always securing whatever arms, horses, or prisoners fell in their way; until, wearied with labour, they made for the appointed rendezvous, which was not far from New Kent Courthouse, at a small village where several main roads joined. The first party that arrived found that the place contained several finely furnished sutlers' stores, and depôts of goods deposited thus far in the rear of the army, to be conveyed up to the front as circumstances demanded. They were, in fact, central or wholesale establishments, to furnish regimental sutlers, stocked with everything that could be required, having

tasteful bar-rooms attached, in which were sold champagne, and all sorts of expensive wines and liquors. Our fatigued and dusty men hitched their horses and entered, without ceremony, but were so unprepossessing and unpresentable, that all present rose, including several field officers who had trotted to the rear "to spend the day" convivially. "Brandy, gentlemen?" inquired the fat proprietor, urbanely—"certainly!"—and, presenting decanters, our men began to imbibe freely. "Might I inquire to what cavalry you belong, gentlemen?" asked the proprietor, acutely surveying their dusty figures from head to foot. "We?" answered one, laying violent hands on a box of havannahs, and emptying the decanter, "oh, *we* are Maryland cavalry, just arrived; a new regiment raised in Baltimore, just returned on a scouting party after the rebel Stuart!" "Stuart, eh? You don't mean to say that *he* is in our lines; do you? Well, let him come, that's all, and although I'm not in the army I'll show him a thing or two; just see if I don't!" And as his eye glanced over a fine case of revolvers exposed for sale, he seemed as valiant as Ajax. The rest of the company were dressed too finely to shake hands with our dusty fellows, so smoked and talked apart in dignified reserve. Hearing the approach of a squadron, our troopers went to the door, and the landlord prepared bottles and glasses for his expected visitors. "Are those coming some of your party, gentlemen?" "Yes," was the reply, "and as 'tis no use of fooling any more, *we* are Stuart's cavalry."

All present were struck dumb with astonishment, but

were soon disarmed and made prisoners. As there were four or five large establishments of this kind in the neighbourhood, the command paid attention to all, providing themselves with shoes, clothes, new weapons, and literally "ate out" the establishments, until not a box of sardines or can of oysters or preserves remained on the premises. Such a feast our men had not enjoyed for many months; all took whatever articles were needed and destroyed the rest. Fruits, preserves, sardines, oysters, bread, fine biscuit, crackers, champagne, brandy, whisky, and ale, were consumed with great glee, but none of our men forgot their perilous situation: all remained sober.

About 12 P.M. on Friday night we prepared for the start home, and as it was out of the question to pass by the same route, on the right of M'Clellan's lines, Stuart determined to make the grand tour, and find his way out by the left. The whole army was aroused, and cavalry patrolled all the roads, but none knew the country so well as Stuart, who pushed forward by unfrequented lanes and paths, and safely arrived on the banks of the Chickahominy. No bridges being near, Stuart swam his horse across, and all followed save the artillery. An old farmer had witnessed the crossing, and showed the way to a broken bridge a little way up stream. This was quickly repaired with logs and underbrush, and just as the first dawn of morning topped the trees, the whole command was safely on the south bank.

Our troopers proceeded very cautiously, for they were still in the enemy's lines, and at the most diffi-



cult stage of the journey. The main body followed a by-path through the woods, leading to the Williamsburg road, but scouts were sent out ahead and on the flanks. "Who goes there?" and a shot was the almost instant challenge. Our scouts rapidly fell back to the main body as directed, and as the Yankee mounted outposts pursued, they speedily found themselves in the midst of us, and were secured. This occurred on several occasions, but, by good fortune and daring, the whole command reached the Williamsburg road, and, utterly exhausted, halted on the outskirts of our lines, the enemy being within a mile, and in full force in pursuit. Excitement had strung both man and beast, since their start on Wednesday night; but now that all were safely through the adventure, and passed through Longstreet's division (the right) on their way to camp, on the Brooke Church turnpike (the left), their appearance was most jaded, care-worn, and dusty, having been more than sixty hours in the saddle, almost without drawing rein!

The fruits of this excursion were several hundred head of horses and mules, more than a hundred prisoners, a perfect knowledge of M'Clellan's position, force, and resources, and the destruction of property to the value of several millions. The enemy were signally defeated on several occasions in combats with an inferior force. We killed and wounded many, remounted all that required it, furnished the command with fine weapons, saddles, harness, and clothes, humiliated M'Clellan, and lost but one man, brave Captain Latane, who commanded in the last combat. Singular

as it may seem, our chief officers in this excursion had fought against the very companies and squadrons commanded by them when in the United States' service; and among the first prisoners captured was the trumpeter of Colonel Lee's old company of dragoons. Many of the prisoners took the affair good-humouredly, mounted on mules as they were, but several doctors were apostrophizing Jupiter and all the gods about the cruelty of placing them on saddleless animals with sharp vertebræ, and swearing roundly against riding sixty miles without rest or food! But grumbling availed them nothing; ride they *must*, and the chapfallen, wretched appearance of these sons of Galen was ludicrous in the extreme, and their horsemanship wonderful under the circumstances.

The appearance of our gallant troopers was certainly very unprepossessing. The men were dusty, dirty, and looked more like negroes than whites. Their horses could scarcely move, for, in addition to the long gallop, their riders had overweighted them by loading their saddle-bows with strings of shoes, bundles of blankets, and new weapons of various kinds: not unfrequently the horse and entire outfit were Federal property. Several of the men were scarred or cut, but manfully sat their saddles, and marched along through our lines as gaily as possible, saying "they would not have missed the trip for anything." Such an adventure was worthy of remembrance, and those who participated had some right to feel proud. As for M'Clellan, there can be no doubt that he felt deeply mortified, but he resorted to his old practice of telling half the truth; and in his

despatches to Washington, spoke of it as a trivial affair, and scarcely worthy of mention. In retaliation, the Federal cavalry made frequent incursions into counties within the limits of their own lines, though never attempting to cross ours, and spoke of such exploits as something wonderful. Had they crossed our line, and committed half the havoc acknowledged to have been done within their own, their achievements might have been worthy of mention, but they knew too well the character of our men to attempt any such adventure.

General Stuart was formerly a second lieutenant in U. S. dragoons, but, upon the secession of Virginia, offered his sword to his native State, and raised a company of cavalry. He was soon afterwards elected colonel, and acted as brigadier. He was always found on hazardous duty, and won the confidence of all. His forte was cavalry; of infantry he knew little, and, perhaps, cared less; nevertheless he frequently commanded regiments on foraging excursions during the winter months at Manassas, and kept the cavalry well supplied from his inroads to the vicinity of Drainsville and other places near Washington, under the eye and care of Federal commanders, who laid plans to punish him for his audacity.

On one occasion he started from Manassas with several regiments of infantry, a small force of cavalry, four pieces of artillery (Couts' battery), and over a hundred waggons. The spies of the enemy had informed them of his departure during the night; rockets were seen ascending at various points, and, when morn-

ing broke, the enemy were discovered in great force near Drainsville. Stuart's waggons rapidly retreated, and the fight was opened by infantry. The combat lasted some time; but, owing to incapacity or want of foresight, Stuart found himself outflanked, and subjected to ambuscades at every point. The waggons were now far to the rear, and our small brigade began to give ground before superior force. Coutts' battery had contended for more than an hour with thirty pieces placed on a rise, with caissons and horses screened by farmhouses. Having lost nearly all his animals in this unequal conflict, Coutts fell back, his men drawing off the pieces by hand, many of the cannoniers pulling ropes with one hand and carrying a shell in the other, so as to be able to stop occasionally and fire. Kentuckians, South Carolinians, Georgians, and Virginians disputed the ground inch by inch, and inflicted much loss by their accurate fire. Yankee officers begged their men to charge upon our retreating regiments, and often appeared in front to show the way; yet the Federals could not be induced to move, but allowed our whole force to retire in good order. One of their flanking parties, however, advancing down the railroad, was assailed with great fury, and suffered loss; so, although Stuart halted some two miles distant, and invited another attack, the enemy would not pursue, but rested where they had fought. Next day reinforcements were sent up, when we advanced again, and endeavoured to draw on an engagement; but the Federals remained close within their lines, and allowed us to forage without the shadow of resistance.

Stuart has been much censured for his conduct in this "surprise," and has seldom figured since in command of infantry. As a cavalry officer he stood second to Ashby only in Virginia, and, from his thorough knowledge of the country, was of incalculable service on all occasions. It was at Williamsburg I first saw him. Commanding the cavalry rear-guard on that occasion, he was obliged to fall back before superior numbers, and rode up to Johnson's head-quarters in the village to report, just as the enemy appeared advancing on the redoubts from the Yorktown and Warwick Court-house roads. He appeared much fatigued and overworked, and would have served admirably for a picture of Dick Turpin when chased by officers on the road to York. His horse was a splendid black, with heavy reins and bit, cavalry saddle, and holsters; foam stood in a lather upon him, and he was mud-splashed from head to hoof. Stuart himself wore no insignia of command: a common black felt hat, turned down in front and up behind; a heavy black overcoat, tightly buttoned; elegant riding-boots covering the thigh; a handsome sabre, carelessly slung by his side, and a heavy pair of Mexican spurs, that jingled and rattled on the pavements, were all I could see of this splendid horseman and dashing leader. Thickset, full-faced, close-cut hair, and ruddy complexion, he looked more like Ainsworth's "gentleman of the road" than a young, daring cavalry chief of thirty summers. He leaned in his saddle and communicated with General Johnson, and as both smiled, I could hear that his party had been chased by "old Emory" of the 5th U. S. Dragoons,

whose light artillery could now be heard blazing away south of the town.

As Johnson stands conversing with General Griffiths of the Mississippi Brigade, we have a full view of that well-known officer. He is uncovered, and his small compact head is finely developed. His hair is grey, and cut close; his deep-set grey eyes are full of meaning; his features calm as those of a Jesuit; his complexion is ruddy; he wears military whiskers, and no moustaches; his uniform is of a grey colour with facings of light orange, and stars on the throat. In manner he is decided and unequivocating; short, sharp and dry in conversation; decision of character is plainly seen in the close-set lips: altogether, he is a spruce, neat, compact little man. Although there are no signs of extraordinary intellect, or marks of a man "truly great," his quiet smile, and twinkling eye, betray a person of disciplined tastes and habits, possessed of much craftiness and cunning. I saw little of him around Manassas, but at Yorktown lines he was continually on the move, riding one of the finest chestnut mares the eye ever beheld; a small, active, wiry, fine-blooded, and swift animal, much like the owner. His solicitude was sleepless, and though visiting the principal redoubts and points daily, I have known him to gallop into our battery near midnight, not five minutes after the alarm gun fired, and though the distance ridden was over a mile.

This distinguished man is a whole-souled patriot, brave to a fault, and, did he consider his services would aid our cause more by shouldering a musket than

marshalling large forces, he is one who would willingly enter the ranks. I have seen him under many various circumstances, but always observed in him the smart, active, quick-sighted officer, scrupulously attired in uniform when on duty, but in plain citizen dress when not. Soon as his wound, received at "Seven Pines," permitted, he retired to his farm for a few weeks, and although I travelled in the same car, he was dressed so unprepossessingly, that I did not notice him until he arrived home, when a large crowd of farmers, children, and old women gathered round him at the station to welcome back their "old neighbour, General Joe Johnson," in an unceremonious manner which bespoke volumes of mutual good feeling and fellowship. At the opening of the rebellion he was lieutenant-colonel 1st U. S. Dragoons, and acting quartermaster-general at Washington, but immediately joined the fortunes of his native State (Virginia), and has since risen very high in the estimation of the South.

## CHAPTER VII.

Gossip in Camp—Of Dress, Discipline, and Arms—Preference for Breech-loading Weapons—The Parrot, the Whitworth, and the Armstrong Guns—German Muskets—Advantage of Rifles over Muskets in Action—The Maynard Rifle—Berdan's Sharpshooters—Our Sanitary Condition—Of our Medical Staff—Mortality amongst our Men, and its Cause—Insufficient and inferior Supplies—Of "Baggage" and Transportation.

IN some previous chapters I have endeavoured to picture the condition of our army and the feeling of our men, reproducing, as nearly as possible, such conversations among comrades as it was but natural should occur. It is true, I cannot pretend to graphic skill, or scenic effect, in the report of those gossips; but they are faithful in substance, and they offer me the readiest means of placing much on record that would otherwise run into tedious detail. As I must once more resume the conversational method, I can only hope that faults of style will be overlooked, and the intention only regarded.

"If by accident any European were to visit our lines, what a poor opinion he might form of the true merit of our soldiers! Accustomed to see fine bodies of men, splendidly drilled, and tastefully uniformed, he would be inclined to look upon us as a parcel of ragged, ill-



fed, slovenly-looking, mud-coloured militia, unfit for service, and doomed to discomfiture at the first volley from an enemy. Even the Federal army, though uniformly attired in blue, and smart in appearance, would hardly appear more effective in his eyes, when compared with the brilliancy and neatness of European regiments. It is true that no people who are fighting for their independence can be expected to make the same military display as the old-established standing armies of Europe; yet it is much to be regretted that, through the poverty of Government, we have to depend for clothes upon the industry and charity of our friends at home. A braver army than ours, or one more creditable in its physique, never existed; and were we but well dressed, our European friends would have little cause to smile. ‘Results,’ however, are all that is necessary; and so that we beat the enemy, and ultimately triumph, we can very well forego the pomp and circumstance of war. In peaceful times, I have no doubt that our ‘regulars’ will present a fine and imposing appearance, for Southerners have good taste in attire, and means will not be lacking to put our military establishment on a sound and magnificent footing. What think you, major?”

“I agree with you. It matters little how we are dressed, at present; there are no ladies at our parades, or I might be tempted to make an outlay in fine cloth, and gold lace; but as our fancy manœuvres and field-days are usually with the enemy, I am content to appear in any dress that is fit for wear and tear. So that my weapons and my horse are all right, I care

little for the rest. Yet, there is one thing I do regret, namely, that our regiments are without ‘bands’ to cheer them on the march, and dispel the depressing monotony of the camps. True, bands are allowed by the ‘regulations,’ and much money has been expended in procuring instruments; yet those of our boys who have musical talent refuse to enter the band, from false pride, considering it dishonourable to exchange the musket for a musical instrument, as if they desired to shun the battle-field. They will contribute readily enough; we have now not less than 2,500 dols. in hand to procure instruments, but, except the leader, a Frenchman, and two German volunteers, we have not a man to play them!”

“That is true, old friend, and in those regiments which *have* succeeded in getting up bands, the performance is so wretched for a few months that their dismal noises are an intolerable nuisance. Yet it cannot be avoided; we lack cultivated talent, and many ‘who volunteer to do the blowing,’ as the boys say, have seldom seen, and certainly never before touched, a bugle or cornet. There are the customary drums and fifes, and the ‘regulation’ tunes for ‘reveille’—‘Roast Beef,’ ‘Tattoo,’ and every necessary call; but in walking through camps at any of those times, we hear all kinds of drumming; and as for rival fifers!—they seem to be in an intense screeching agony, whenever called upon, and know no tune except ‘Dixie,’ or the doleful and eternal ‘My Maryland.’ It is absolutely necessary, captain, that something should be done; all our commands are now given by word of mouth, even

in drilling. Such a system is exhausting to commanders, and it causes indecision and confusion in the ranks, from the failure of the voice, while in battle it is impossible to be heard at all. Fancy every officer bawling out the word of command, and oftentimes the wrong one, in some abominable falsetto amid the din of arms and the tramp of hurrying feet. In our cavalry and artillery corps the trumpet is used, and with splendid effect. Why cannot our infantry be commanded with the bugle?

“Under innumerable circumstances music is necessary to the soldier, and has a beneficial effect. How inspiring it is to hear a good band strike up a cheerful tune on a long march, how stragglers jump to their places, how quickly the file is dressed, and how easy the step becomes, no matter how weary or how long the march may be! It seems to me we look like a regiment of geese marching through town, without the strains of music to mark the time. If Jenkins were here he would smile and say, ‘These things are different in Europe.’ They are so, and they will be different here in time. The old armies have their light and heavy infantry and cavalry, their rifles, and every branch of the service well represented, each having its particular part to play in skirmish or battle; but owing to our hurry in forming the Southern army, and the continual succession of stirring events, we have but three classes—artillery, infantry and cavalry,—without further distinctions; and one regiment is considered as ‘heavy’ as another if it musters only five hundred men. The enemy have splendid bands, for there are

German, Dutch, Italians, and French in their ranks by tens of thousands. Not so with us. The ruling foreign element with us is Irish, and, although Irishmen are passionately fond of music, they still cling to the musket, and make music of their own in the hour of battle. I wish we had a hundred thousand of them; they make the best soldiers in the world."

"We *have* some good bands in the service, major, though I confess but few of them. The Louisiana bands are occasionally good, and that of the 1st Virginia Foot is one among a thousand. But, as you observe, it is to be regretted our boys will not volunteer to play, instead of lavishly throwing their money away on those who have no talent for it. The want of uniformity in our 'calls' is notorious; what one regiment beats for 'tattoo' its next neighbour will furiously drum for 'reveille.' All the men know is that drums are beating for 'something,' and they turn out with alacrity to ascertain what that something is. But this is not in form, and though commanders look upon the matter lightly, it may be the occasion of much mischief. Take a case in point:—At the battle of 'Oak Hill, in Missouri, the camps and commands of Price and M'Culloch were some distance apart, and the Missourians, it is said, were so much accustomed to beating drums at all times, that when they were suddenly attacked by Lyon, M'Culloch took no notice of the call, until Siegel opened fire upon his pickets, when he ascertained that for *once* the Missouri drummers meant something by their thumpings. I do not say that such a thing would happen with us, for as

volunteers we are the best drilled in 'essentials' of any troops in the world, and are ever on the alert, more frequently moving in search of the enemy than being sought. But although uniforms, fine bands, pipeclay, and all the rest are desirable things enough, we must, for the present, be content to do without them. To speak of other things more essential to our success and existence as a nation, what think you of our weapons? Are *they* all you could desire? What say you, Robins, of the artillery?"

"You have called an incompetent authority for judgment upon such an important point, for as I am not an educated officer, I know but little of the science of gunnery, and less of casting guns. As a volunteer I am not a bad shot, but that is another thing. I know this, however, that if the various battle-fields had not supplied us with new weapons, we should have been badly off at the present time. Our supply of good guns, when the war opened, was very inadequate; and although we have upon our side the best engineers and artillerists of the old service, we have never yet succeeded in making pieces equal to those brought into the field by the enemy. In fact, it is dangerous to use guns of our own manufacture, for, to my knowledge, many have exploded upon the first trial in the field, and others have been so inaccurate they were worse than useless. We succeeded in procuring some good ones from England, by vessels which ran the blockade; and the fact that our Government has not purchased European guns of any other manufacture, speaks well for British superiority in this respect.

“We have captured hundreds of excellent guns from the enemy, of all which the ‘Parrot’ is my favourite, being much lighter, more durable, stronger at the breech, of longer range, and safer to handle. The ‘Parrot’ gun, you know, was invented by a Georgian, and patented before the war began; the enemy have extensively patronized the weapon. But of all guns, I most admire Whitworth’s English breech-loading pieces. We had several of them during our blockade of the Lower Potomac in the winter months of 1861 and 1862, at Cockpit Point, and other places, and their accuracy was amazing, while the unnecessary, unsightly, dangerous, and detestable ramrod business was entirely discarded, and the rapidity of fire greatly increased. It requires no great amount of scientific knowledge to see that the rammer and ramrod are totally behind the age, and should be discouraged and disused. All that is required of a good gun can be realized by breech-loading, and, from experience, I can do more with such a weapon than any other. It occupies less room in working, and saves the men from unnecessary exposure and loss. In England, I know, the invention of Armstrong is patronized; they may have potent reasons for the preference, but our men prefer Whitworth’s weapon.”\*

“I agree with you entirely, Robins,” said the major, “in regard to the ramrod; I think it should be abolished. Half the men you see walking about town with arms in slings have been hit while loading, for the

---

\* This was written long before Whitworth was patronized by the English Government.

enemy fire high, and had we breech-loading muskets in our battles, few would have been struck at all. There are other important reasons besides this for objecting to the ramrod. In a rifle, accuracy entirely depends upon the cartridge properly 'chambering,' as with artillery. It is difficult to load a rifle perfectly tight at any time, and especially in the heat of action, for the best of rifles 'lead' so, that it is a matter of impossibility to ram home the charge; but if we had breech-loaders, the weapon might 'lead' at the bore, but a fresh cartridge introduced at the breach would clean it. Try both methods, and you will perceive that rapidity and accuracy are gained by using the breech to load, for if you lose your ramrod in the confusion or excitement, how much is your weapon worth? The 'thumb' should be the only ramrod—you do not lose that often, and whether the weapon be 'dirty' or 'leaded,' your charge is sufficiently 'home' for every purpose; besides much closer fitting cartridges can be used, without the process of greasing or ramming, for the thumb does the last, and a fresh bullet the former. During one of our battles, I saw a youth fix his ramrod to a tree, and endeavour to push the cartridge 'home' in that way, for the musket was so 'dirty' from use, that it was impossible to ram the load. Here was a situation for the boy to be in—ramrod bent, and the musket useless!"

"Since the enemy have supplied us with arms," said another, we have had a good variety of weapons among us—the English Enfield rifle, by various makers; the old Harper's Ferry musket; the Harper's Ferry Minié musket; the new and old Springfield musket, rifled

and smooth bore; and last of all, that heavy, unhandy, clumsily-made thing called the German, or Belgian rifle, which carries a ball equal to that of a young six-pounder. The Belgians or Germans, who use this weapon, must be hard, large-fisted fellows, used to playing with a pair of fifty-sixes; for it is certainly the most ungainly rifle mortal ever used; being furnished with a heavy oak stock, and trappings of iron and brass, sufficient to decorate a howitzer. Those I have seen apparently come from some part of Austria, judging by the name-plate. The Mississippi rifle is also too heavy, and carries a large ball: though good for its time, it is now superseded by lighter and more accurate weapons."

"Take a seat, adjutant," said Robins, as Lieutenant Nixon entered the tent. "We have been speaking of the different kinds of weapons, and by general consent it seems breech-loaders are preferred; what think *you*?"

"I am a better judge of pens than rifles, perhaps, but many old wiseheads still seem to prefer the smooth-bore musket—brown Bess, as it is called—and consider it more destructive than any."

"Yes," said the major, "their reasons are peculiar; I have frequently heard them. They tell you that at short range, with buckshot, you can kill more than with the rifle. But how often do we get within that short range? If we mutually advanced until within a hundred yards, and then blazed away until one or the other were exterminated, I should decide for a smooth-bore musket, and a sufficiency of buckshot. But suppose the enemy occupied a skirt of woods, and not coming



out, we were ordered, as usual, to advance over a thousand yards of open field, and *force* them out—must your men be exposed to their fire, for that distance, until you arrived within a hundred yards, the maximum effective distance of the ordinary musket? The foe would pour several volleys before you could return them, if you ran ever so fast. What condition would your line be in for the onset, after being thinned by their shot, when you halted to re-form, fire, or charge? Surely the case is a plain one. You would have lost many men, the remainder would be sorely fatigued, and their nerves shaken, so that when they *did* fire, half the volley would be thrown away; and there you stand before an untouched regiment fit to annihilate you, if they have the pluck to move forward.”

“ ‘ Their rifle fire at a thousand or five hundred yards would not be effective,’ you say? True, with such shots as the New-Englanders; but if they were Western men opposing you, your regiment would be sadly deceived, for they shoot as well as our best. But suppose they failed to hit a single man for a few hundred yards, would young troops unhesitatingly advance under such a threatening fire? Scores would drop from trepidation; for they are usually more frightened than hurt. Give these same boys good breech-loading rifles, without fears of the all-important ramrod before their mind, and they can advance, firing volley for volley, and loading as they walk or run—a feat impossible, if the ramrod is to be drawn and returned in a hurry. With a good breech-loading rifle that cleans itself, as I have explained, if troubled with dirt or lead, a well-

made tape cap, and sword-bayonet, our boys would prove invincible."

"Well," said the adjutant, "European nations who fight more frequently than we, on a grander and more scientific scale, still retain the ramrod and percussion-cap; it must be conceded that as the subject vitally interests them, there must be powerful reasons for adhering to that system, though personally I agree with what you say, and know that you do not insist upon the tape cap, but a nipple suitable to both. As for the sword-bayonet, we have never yet used it except in a few unimportant combats. It is far preferable, however, to the old bayonet, and would prove a valuable side-arm in close encounters, where the rifle or musket is useless. In every way, it is a valuable improvement, and put to a variety of useful purposes by the men, when the old bayonet would not be of more utility than a stick."

"The Maynard rifle," said a cavalry man, "is the favourite with us, and proves a destructive weapon when one becomes accustomed to handling it, mounted, or in a skirmish. It is light, simple in structure, and can be used with both caps; the only objection is, that you have to be careful in preserving the empty brass tubes, or you will not be able to make new cartridges. I wear a belt round me, which holds fifty, each in its hole, handy for use, but I object to the brass tubes, for, if lost, it is difficult to replace them in active service."

"I consider that the 'Maynard' was never intended for the army—for that, among other reasons,

it is admirably fitted for hunting, and was, perhaps, invented for that purpose; though light, and of easy carriage, too much care is requisite in preparing the cartridge for ordinary vidette service. Did you ever see any of those globe, or telescopic-sighted rifles, exclusively used by Berdan's battalions of sharpshooters in the Federal army? They are a very accurate weapon, but expensive, I am told; yet the Federals have not done much mischief with them. The men are trained to climb trees, lay on their back, crawl rapidly through the grass, have grass-green pantaloons to prevent detection, &c.; but with all the usual systematic boasting regarding them, our Texans and others are more than a match for them. We have picked off a greater number of them than we have ourselves lost by their wonderful shooting; but as our men do not waste much time in skirmishing, but hasten to 'close quarters,' I have not heard much of them for some time, although a few months since nothing was talked of, North, but the extraordinary achievements of 'Berdan's Sharpshooters.' To believe their reports, nearly every general in our army has fallen under their 'unerring aim.' The best sharpshooters with us are to be found among the Missourians, Texans, Arkansans, Mississippians, and Alabamians—men accustomed to woods and swamps, and to Indian warfare."

"Speaking of losses," said one, "we have suffered fearfully from disease, but not so much in proportion as the Federal army, judging from their frequent statements. Our men seem to stand campaigning much better than theirs. It was said by the Northern journals

that winter would cause more loss to us than a dozen battles, for it was thought we could not stand cold, hail, frost, sleet, and freezing weather; but I think the health of our troops was much better during that period than in summer. Men, with strong wills, can do or suffer anything. We erected comfortable cabins in two days, and having timber all around us, kept up roaring fires of logs. During the summer and fall, however, our hospital lists were heavy with chills, fevers, rheumatism, and the like, but now we are thoroughly acclimated, and the hills, snows, cold winds, and mud of Virginia are as bearable and pleasant to the boys, as their own sunny South, near the waters of the Gulf. Here is Dr. Wilson, smoking at his ease. What have *you* to say regarding this matter, doctor? No long, barbarous, four-footed professional terms, if you please!"

The fine old doctor appealed to, remarked that, "In plain English, the commissary department has not done its duty. When our youth were called to the field, they were unaccustomed to hardships or privations—being for the most part well-educated, comfortably-circumstanced, and never subjected to any labour at home harder than a week's hunting. They were lavish in their expenditure, had superabundance of clothing, and servants to attend them. All this was reversed in camp. Money, for a time, was plentiful, but supplies could not be obtained round the country, for our troops swarmed like locusts over everything eatable; nor could their wants be supplied from home, for all transportation was so much occupied with troops

and munitions, that after the first month's service, sugar, coffee, molasses, and rice—things we thought *impossible* to do without—were seldom given in rations, although abundant enough far South. Our boys, again, were careless; eating anything or everything that came in their way; and as the digesting organs are not made exactly of steel, or copper, such abuses brought on very natural consequences. Again, their clothing, though light and sufficient for Southern use, was not durable enough to withstand the change of climate, and the variable weather of a hilly country in comparatively Northern latitudes; besides which they were reprehensively careless, moving about in all weathers, and unceremoniously squatting down in dry or damp places. Much of all this was occasioned by the continual movements of our generals, and as the men seldom troubled that abortion called a 'knapsack,' but simply marched with arms, accoutrements, and rations, every medical man in the army foresaw that hundreds would be sacrificed.

“Young men of refined habits, inhabitants of cities, have made the best of soldiers; while, strange as it may seem, those bred in the country and accustomed to woods and fields, have frequented the hospitals far more than any others. This can only be accounted for by the thoughtfulness, neatness, and scrupulous cleanliness of the one, compared with the carelessness and thoughtlessness of the other. But the chief cause of all our sickness has arisen from the lack of good, well-cooked food, regularly changed and diversified. What kind of bread can you expect boys to

make, who have never seen the process, and are not furnished with proper ingredients or utensils for rendering it wholesome? For several months it was the common practice in the army to make up the flour into 'slap-jacks' or 'fritters,' which were nothing more than a thin mixture of flour and water fried in a sea of bacon grease! I know regiments which have been in the service sixteen months, and three-fourths of the time have had nought for rations but flour and very poor fat bacon. I do not complain of Government, for I know the heart of the President bleeds, and he would willingly enter the ranks, rather than fill the position he does, while thousands of office-seekers and petty malcontents are growling around and vilifying him, as if he were something worse than a common thief; but I *do* say, that our poverty, and carelessness in the commissary and quartermaster's departments, have much to do with these disasters.\*

“ When we were appointed to our several posts,

---

\* There are many honourable exceptions to the carelessness and incapacity of which the doctor complains, and all must join in eulogizing the Herculean labours of Assistant Quartermaster-General William L. Cabell. This officer, by unceasing labour, night and day, has brought up his department to a high state of efficiency. His despatch of business is marvellous—he seems to understand, intuitively, the wants, shortcomings, and capacity of every one with whom he has business. He found his department in a chaotic state; but by constant and untiring labour, he has done much to place our army on a comfortable footing, while, by prudence and forethought, he has prevented unnecessary expenditure, and greatly facilitated the designs and movements of our generals. He is a Virginian, about thirty-five years of age; entered the old service as brevet 2nd lieutenant of Infantry, July 1st, 1850; was captain, 7th Infantry, March 3rd, 1855; and appointed captain assistant quartermaster, March 8th, 1858. This gentleman's labours are beyond all praise.

what did these much-abused doctors find? Hundreds of sick, lying on the bare ground; no hospitals, but simple tents to withstand the weather; and oftentimes not a grain of medicine of any kind on hand, nearer than Richmond! And how stood matters in the capital? All in confusion, and short of supplies. In the hurry of the first months, hundreds of so-called ‘doctors’ thronged the city in quest of preferment, and to my own knowledge—either from incapacity or carelessness—the heads of the Medical Department appointed scores of men who could scarcely write their own names, or tell the difference between salts and strychnine—impostors who brought disgrace upon an honourable profession, and were unfitted to administer poison to a dog!”

“Yes, the doctor is right,” said another, “things are gradually improving, but the price of our experience has been awful; though nothing like the mortality among the enemy from similar causes,—if *that* is any consolation. M’Clellan acknowledges to have lost nearly 50,000 men during his stay on the peninsula, chiefly from sickness! Johnson always managed to keep him in some kind of swamp or mud-hole, and when a certain person complained of his inactivity before ‘Seven Pines,’ he answered:—‘*I am fighting, sir, every day!* Is it nothing that I compel the enemy to inhabit the swamps, like frogs, and lessen their strength every hour, without firing a shot?’ That was all very well, but I am convinced if Lee had not taken the helm when he did, we might have been ‘falling back’ towards the Gulf.

“I see there is some difference of opinion on this point, and therefore keep to the doctor’s chain of thought. There is no doubt that good bread and pure water are the two essentials of a soldier’s welfare. He may exist for a long time, and do excellent work without anything more, but these he *must* have. Beauregard managed things very indifferently at Corinth, in those respects: there was a superabundant supply of excellent water a few score feet below the surface, but yet few wells were dug; men scooped up sufficient water from the surface, or from a few indifferent springs, but the quality was wretched, as all water usually is in the South. Much sickness was the consequence. Halleck, on the other hand, had not been in Corinth more than three days before he bored for water, and had many fine artesian and other wells in operation, which would have more than sufficed for three times the number of men in both armies. Virginia is the only place where fine water is abundant in the South, yet at Yorktown and other places the quality and supply were inferior. The same may be said of Manassas. Although Bull Run ran there, the men had an aversion to using that stream, except for washing purposes. How strange our generals never thought of digging wells!”

“The bread question,” said the doctor, “is an all-important one; old troops become expert bakers in time, but young ones only spoil the flour, and ruin their digestion. In truth, flour should not be distributed at all; ‘cracker bread’ is what is required, and it takes up no greater amount of transportation than flour. By giving the men good hard bread, it relieves them of



many duties; for oftentimes flour is served out when there are no utensils in which to make it. I have frequently seen men receive their ration of flour, after a hard day's march, when the baggage waggons with the pots and pans were far ahead. I have often pitied our boys when, under these circumstances, the poor fellows have had to bake their flour in the ashes, or toast the dough on a stick!—anything, in fact, to satisfy hunger! The British troops in the Crimea were sadly perplexed about cooking, and hundreds died from the improper preparation of food. Soyer endeavoured to teach them better, but they never succeeded so well as their French neighbours. We excel both in that respect, and although not ‘a nation of cooks,’ have done wonderfully well.

“Our generals *did* endeavour to erect large bakeries to supply the army, but they were too small, at Manassas and elsewhere. Those that *could* bake *would* not—‘they enlisted to shoulder a musket,’ they said, and could not be prevailed upon to try their hands at bread-making, though hundreds were professional bakers, and excellent workmen. The scarcity of salt, soda, and other articles has sorely tried our men in preparing bread; and even if they succeeded in purchasing these and other necessities, there was no transportation allowed for such articles. One waggon was the maximum allowed to each company; and if the roads proved heavy, the order came, ‘lighten the waggons,’ and every article but tents and such like was pitched into the road; pots and pans were among the first to be sacrificed. Generals and others, however, always found

room for *their* traps, and men did not fail to notice and grumble at it. For why should a colonel be allowed to carry his stove, desk, bedstead, and trunk, when room can scarcely be found or allowed for a private's coffee-pot or frying-pan? The rank and file are socially superior, in a majority of cases, to those who command them; and with all deference to the present company, I think our officers have not shown sufficient interest or solicitude for the comfort and well-being of their men."

"In many instances, that is true," said one, "but as to myself, there has been so much grumbling and growling about the subject of 'baggage' with quartermasters and others, that I have thrown all mine away. I have my sword, a blanket, havresack, canteen, and a change of under-clothing thrust in a light knapsack, and let everything else go; for our waggons are always far off—you never *can* find what you put in them—and as we are continually moving about and fighting, I find my load sufficiently heavy without adding to it. Hundreds of officers do the same, I find; and, except the brigade is stationary, never think of increasing our bulk of baggage. When ordered to march I am at the head of my company, heavily laden as any; the boy makes a fire when the 'halt' is sounded, and throwing myself down on my blanket, I share rations with some 'mess' or other, and am ready to move or fight at a moment's warning. As for thinking of toilet and appearance, a full supply of pots and pans for cooking, &c., in times like these, it is all nonsense. Our waggons are scarcely sufficient to carry tents, ammuni-

tion, and flour. We are lightly armed, lightly fed march rapidly, fight frequently, and so that we beat the enemy, and get barely enough to sustain life, we ought to be contented. Such an army as ours can never be whipped—generals and privates are all lean animals little else but bone and muscle, reduced to a proper fighting weight, and all the better for not being encumbered with the baggage of a Xerxes !”

## CHAPTER VIII.

June 26—Commencement of the Week's Campaign before Richmond—  
 Battles of "Mechanicsville," "Beaver Dam Creek," and "Ellyson's  
 Mills"—Terrific Battle Scene—Preparations for a further Advance.

THE reader may picture to himself a party of officers belonging to the "ragged rebels" seated together at my window comparing notes, and speculating on the probabilities of speedy hostilities.—"M'Clellan seems to think he has not sufficient troops, and asks for more. He makes the startling admission that he has lost not less than 50,000 men since his arrival on the peninsula in March! I cannot comprehend how this can be, unless sickness has decimated his ranks. As he owns to have had 185,000 at that period, he must have 135,000 men now, unless the scattered remains of Banks', Fremont's, Milroy's, and Shields' corps have been gathered and sent to him. There cannot be a doubt, however, that he has drawn largely upon M'Dowell, who has been hovering around Fredericksburg for the past two months. As there is water communication between him and M'Clellan, I should not be surprised to find, when the next battle comes off, that M'Dowell is either with him, or has largely reinforced him. Conjecture as we may, this continual

line of ice waggons passing under our windows all day, shows that the hospitals are being prepared for emergencies."

"Orders have already been issued to 'clear the hospitals,' I learn," said another, "and that I regard as one of the best of signs. Our commissariat, also, has been unusually active during the past week in delivering extra supplies, and every man is furnished with sixty extra rounds of ammunition. All the field forges and blacksmiths' shops, in and out of the army, have been busy night and day for the past week, and hundreds of horses have passed through the hands of the farriers. All these things mean something; but more remarkable than all is the fact that *Jackson, instead of returning to the Valley, as the enemy expected, has turned the head of his column towards Hanover Court-house, on the enemy's right and rear!*"

"This explains, then," said one, "why Lee sent him such heavy reinforcements. After his brilliant series of victories over the Federals, he fell back, as usual, to recuperate, and the Yankees, expecting his speedy reappearance among them, detached several corps to watch for and overwhelm him if he advanced. Thus, the force of Milroy, Shields, Banks, Fremont, and M'Dowell, which were primarily intended to advance from the west upon Richmond, and co-operate with M'Clellan on the east in reducing our capital, are scattered up and down the Valley, strategically, to watch and capture the redoubtable 'Stonewall,' while the Texan and two other brigades are sent round to reinforce him at Charlottesville. But instead of run-

ning into the snare prepared for him, Jackson knows his opponents are beyond supporting distance of M'Clellan, so is ordered to advance rapidly on their right and rear, while we co-operate by an attack in front. *This* is evidently the plan, and, if properly executed, will rebound to the glory of Lee, who framed it. M'Clellan, however, is fully aware of this movement, and although he cannot prevent the impending 'crash,' he is energetically preparing to meet it. FitzJohn Porter, you know, commands the right, M'Clellan the centre, and Heinzleman the left."

"Heinzleman is a crafty old fellow," said another, "and is not to be caught with chaff. Do you know I have seen large volumes of smoke ascending along their whole line? I knew it indicated destruction of stores, and heard General Almsted say as much on Sunday (June 20). 'Old Heinzleman,' said he, 'is a wily old major; see those large bodies of smoke ascending on their left—they have been frequent for the past few days, and Mac is preparing for the worst.'"

"But I have seen no peculiar disposition of force in *our* lines for an aggressive movement, if one is contemplated."

"There is no particle of doubt that it is contemplated, but Lee will not weaken any point of his lines until the decisive moment, for M'Clellan might attack on a weak side. When Jackson is in position, you will see Lee's divisions move as if by magic!"

"He has changed all our brigades entirely within the past week, and commanders now have different troops; what does all that mean?"

"I do not know," said another, "that my reasons are correct, but I think Lee has simply acquiesced in the long-expressed desire which State regiments have had of being brigaded together, so that if successful or otherwise, they have only themselves to thank or blame. This plan of brigading excites great emulation, and State pride will carry the boys through difficulties they might not attempt if joined with other troops. Whatever the reasons, the thing is done, as far as practicable, and the commands so changed and divided that I scarcely know *what* regiments are commanded by this or that general, although up to the present time I was well informed."

In short, however we might speculate, it was generally known that a grand action was inevitable, for Jackson's movements from Gordonsville were rapid, and fully known to half the people of Richmond. On Wednesday, June 25th, it was rumoured that he had reached Hanover Court-house, fifteen miles to the right and rear of the enemy, and the general anxiety was oppressive. Rockets at night were continually ascending on our left, which Jackson answered, and his last orders were to move next day in the rear of Mechanicsville. Longstreet's and D. H. Hill's divisions suddenly marched from the Williamsburg road on Wednesday, and bivouacked on the Mechanicsville road, Huger and others being left to hold the right against any attack. General Ambrose Hill's division was on the Meadow Bridge road, to the left of Longstreet, and General Branch's brigade occupied the extreme left on the Brook Church (or Hanover Court-house) road.

On the north bank of the river, at Brook Church bridge, the enemy had collected in force, to dispute the advance of Branch, but on learning that Jackson was in their rear, they offered but a feeble resistance. Branch's brigade, therefore, crossed over rapidly about 3 P.M., and pursued the enemy down the stream, and passed the Meadow Bridge, where General Ambrose Hill was crossing. Thus far events had kept Jackson on our extreme left, endeavouring to get farther in the enemy's rear; Branch's brigade was the centre, and Ambrose Hill's division the right of our forces, which had crossed. In this order they fought and pursued the enemy vigorously, capturing many field-works and some cannon. The fight from Meadow Bridge was obstinately maintained, the rattle of musketry and booming of field and siege-pieces being well-nigh deafening. The day being fine, a splendid view was obtained from Longstreet's position, on the south bank, of the progress of the battle on the north side. The advance of our men through the green fields could be plainly seen, in face of the volleys of musketry incessantly poured in upon them from every wood and thicket. Porter's field-pieces were admirably worked, and occupied every position of value; the movements of his infantry were executed without confusion.

From this position the enemy were seen to be gradually falling back, making it evident that Jackson was advancing too close upon their rear, although as yet he had not fired a shot; while the confusion, clouds of dust, roar of ordnance, and excitement of couriers round Porter's head-quarters at Mechanicsville, told



how vigorously Branch was pushing forward our centre, and driving the enemy out of the earthworks they had erected at various points. Hugging the north bank, Ambrose Hill maintained an unbroken line, and from the appearance of smoke rising closer and closer to Mechanicsville, it was evident that he was rapidly gaining ground, and felt certain of storming the village before sunset. Branch was still some distance behind; yet Hill, with his 14,000 men, determined to push on, and drive off the enemy that held the bridge, so as to open and clear the way for Longstreet and D. H. Hill. After much hard fighting this was accomplished, and the latter generals pushed forward across Mechanicsville bridge with their divisions, and soon formed line at right angles with the river. Meanwhile Ambrose Hill had re-formed his troops, and commenced an attack upon Mechanicsville itself, which brought on a terrific fight.

This place had been admirably fortified by FitzJohn Porter, who, as an engineer and artillerist, had bestowed much care and labour upon the works. Its strength was such that if Jackson had not been hovering in the rear of the enemy, it is probable that Hill would have felt himself too weak to attempt its capture. Artillery on both sides now opened with a terrific roar, and, as evening fell, the flash of guns and long lines of musketry fire could be seen in bright relief against the blue and cloudless sky. After a deafening cannonade of half-an-hour, and while showers of shell were screaming through the air, and lighting up the face of friend and foe when they burst, loud yells from the distant woods

assured us our men were advancing to the assault. For a moment a deathlike silence reigned over all; and then again, our approach being seen, the enemy's artillery opened with extraordinary rapidity, until it seemed as if every tree in the forests was cracking and shivering to pieces. Barns, houses, and stacks of hay and straw were in a blaze. By their light our men were plainly visible rushing across the open spaces through infernal showers of grape, and swarming into the breastworks. The explosion of caissons was frequent, and the constant pattering of musketry within the village showed our men were there also. In a little while the Federal guns were silent, a loud noise of many voices was heard, and then a long, wild, piercing yell, as of ten thousand demons, and the place was ours.\* Presently the enemy's artillery might be seen flashing from mounds and hillocks lower down the stream, rapidly throwing shell into the village; but suddenly ours flash from out the darkness not far from them, and the duel continues with much fierceness as Hill is reorganizing for another advance.

While this was progressing at the village, General Ripley's brigade moved still farther to the left and front to attack the intrenched position of the enemy at Ellyson's Mills, but owing to the darkness and the

---

\* Pickett's brigade, of Ambrose Hill's division, always distinguished itself. Brigadier-General Pickett is a Virginian, but was appointed to West Point as a cadet from Illinois. He entered the old service as brevet second lieutenant 8th Infantry, July 1st, 1846; was brevetted captain, September 18th, 1847, for meritorious services; and gazetted captain 9th Infantry, March 3rd, 1855. He joined his mother State when it seceded, and has proved an excellent officer.

strength of the place, had to retire with loss. This mill was situated on ground higher than the country immediately surrounding it, and the water which worked it ran through a swamp, debarring all assault in front. The road ran beside this swamp, and up a rise situated between the Federal camps on the right, and their field-works to the left of the mill. Their artillery swept all approach through the fields, and by the road. All timber was carefully cleared away, and the only possible method in which the position could be attacked was by crossing the creek and swamp higher up, and getting in the rear. In the excitement and darkness, Ripley advanced his line through the open fields, and had reached the road and swamp in front, when suddenly the enemy opened with grape, at seventy yards, and mowed down whole files of our men. The word to "charge" ran from wing to wing, and our men running down the bank to the road beneath, were stopped by the impassable swamp and abattis; to the right, up the rising road, cannon also blazed in their faces, and well-posted infantry poured in showers of small shot. Our loss at this point numbered several hundreds, and was an unnecessary sacrifice of human life. Retreat was the only alternative, and under cover of the darkness it was effected with little additional loss. From Ellyson's Mills and Beaver Dam Creek (the latter two miles down the Chickahominy), the enemy maintained an incessant cannonade until late in the night, and the luminous flight of shells made a beautiful and comparatively harmless pyrotechnic display, which was witnessed with pleasure by thousands.

When Ambrose Hill had captured Mechanicsville, Branch's brigade arrived upon the scene, and dispositions were instantly made for renewing the conflict early next morning. Ellyson's Mills on our left, in front, and Beaver Dam Creek on the right, in front, were considerable obstacles to an advance. These positions were equidistant and within range of each other: they completely commanded the roads, and all approach to them was guarded by artillery, which threw twenty-four pound shells into every thicket and bush to our front. Ambulances, carriages, and litters were busy in collecting and conveying the wounded to Richmond; prisoners were collected, spoil secured, and various divisions put in proper order and position for Friday's operations. The tramp of men was incessant; artillery and ammunition waggons toiled along; stragglers were brought in; captured cannon and stores sent to the rear, and from Brook Church turnpike to Mechanicsville, a distance of several miles, lights were flitting in fields and woods, searching for the wounded, or burying the dead. The enemy had suffered more severely than ourselves, though protected by frequent field-works and rifle-pits, which had to be carried with the bayonet. The character of Porter's troops, however, was not the best, for, had they fought as ours did, the number of those lost on either side would have been reversed.

As we anticipated, McClellan had been heavily reinforced after the battle of "Seven Pines." Among the first prisoners I encountered were the "Bucktail Rifles" and "Pennsylvania Reserve Corps," which

formed part of General M'Call's division, hurriedly sent from M'Dowell's army round Fredericksburg. M'Call, then 12,000 strong, together with parts of Fremont's and Shields' Valley troops, had reached M'Clellan, and had augmented his force by at least 20,000 men. We were evidently outnumbered, but this news came too late. The prisoners, numerous as they were, spoke confidently of M'Clellan's success, and seemed to pity us for daring to attack him. They did not know where he intended to make his "big fight," but as heavy forces were posted at Gaine's Mills (his centre, on both banks) it was possible our overthrow would be consummated there. I never saw such impudent and bombastic fellows as these Pennsylvanians were—always excepting New England troops. Although they had been soundly thrashed by Jackson in the Valley, and by Lee at this place, they spoke of "strategic movements," "change of base," &c. as solemnly as donkeys.

About midnight, our preparations being completed, Brigadiers Featherstone and Pryor moved up towards Beaver Dam Creek on the right, and Brigadier Maxy Gregg, towards Ellyson's Mills, on the left, Jackson being still to the enemy's rear, and converging towards the Chickahominy, in the direction of Coal Harbour, near Gaine's Mill. Featherstone's Mississippians, in advance, hugged the river, and halted on a wooded slope near the stream, within five hundred yards of the position of Beaver Dam Creek. The movement was effected silently, and in the dim light I could plainly see the work before us. A farm-house was situated

about half a mile from the river, on high ground, which sloped towards the bank. A creek ran in front of the dwellings, and at right angles to Featherstone and the river. No bridges were discovered on which to cross and get in the rear, where rose majestic woods filled with troops. The "rise" was crowned with strong breastworks, commanding all approaches, and rifle-pits on the flanks covered the creek. Pryor, and his Louisianians, occupied higher grounds to the left of this position, screened by woods, while the entire front was open fields.

Featherstone, who commanded, had been to consult with superior officers, and returning about 4 A. M. (Friday, June 27th), found the enemy had discovered his covert, and were vigorously shelling it. His men jumped to their arms, and advanced in the twilight—when from the mound to the left in front, from the banks of the creek on the flanks, and from the elevated rifle-pits to the rear, came rapidly and more rapidly the flash of artillery and musketry. The disparity of numbers and position would have appalled any troops but those selected to storm the place. Skirmishers advanced to the front, and, occupying bushes on the edge of the creek, maintained a brisk and deadly fire, and in a short time cleared the opposite bank, while the main body advanced with loud shouts to the attack. Volunteers from both brigades constructed temporary bridges on which to cross, but the passage was obstinately disputed and many were killed.

Once across, the infantry fight became animated, while three companies of artillery poured showers of

shell into the enemy's works, and silenced several guns. Pryor, on the left, was slow in his advance; but Featherstone, riding over, soon urged them into rapid motion, and as our right had pushed some distance ahead towards the left rear of the Federal position, the Louisianians assailed the right with terrific yells, and finding a passage across the creek, were soon on a line with our right. The enemy's infantry, though numerous, seemed disinclined to venture on open ground, so while our wings held theirs in check, [an assault in front was determined upon. For this, however, Pryor deemed our force insufficient; and having sent for reinforcements unknown to Featherstone, Brigadier Wilcox came on the scene with his Alabamians. The chief command would now have devolved on Wilcox, but he waived his right, and our artillery opened at shorter range with a terrific noise; suddenly the cannonade ceased, and up sprung our centre, rushed across the creek, up the "rise," over the dry ditch, and in a few moments were swarming over the parapet, shooting and bayoneting the troops defending it.

The sight at this moment was awfully grand. Men standing on the parapet were fighting in every conceivable attitude, and as the sun brilliantly rose over the tree-tops, illumining the scene, the semicircular line of fight, with its streams of fire, bursting of caissons, shouts, yells, and charging on the right and left—the centre occupied by the strong redoubt, crowds of combatants rushing in and out, with a sea of heads swaying to and fro round our banner floating on the wall,—all was soul-stirring, sublime and horrible. The fight on

and around the hill, supports advancing from the woods, the volley and rush of our men to prevent it—the occasional discharge of cannon in the works—men clambering up and tumbling from parapets—the yells, shrieks, and shouts of friend and foe in that central position, clouded with vapour, and its floating banner—all spoke of a terrible attack and a desperate resistance. One wild yell!—out poured the enemy; and as they rushed across the open ground to their brethren in the woods, there came Southerners through the opening in pursuit—reeling, bleeding, shouting, powder-blackened, and fainting—madly firing random shots, and sinking from fatigue. Quickly the line was formed in rear of the works; all joined in the final charge; cannon belched forth grape and canister into the woods, tearing down limbs and trees; then one ringing shout passed along the line; “double quick” was the order given, and drawing the enemy’s fire, our men replied at fifty yards, yelled, charged into the timber, and scattered them like chaff before the wind. All was over!—the foe hastily retreated through the wood, where our cavalry could not follow. Cannon, small arms, prisoners, and stores, were the trophies of victory; Wilcox took up the advance, while, wearied with several hours’ severe fighting and loss, the other two brigades rested round the well-contested redoubt.

In the midst of all this din, loud reports from the left, and stray shell screaming overhead, told that Gregg’s South Carolinian Brigade was similarly engaged at Ellyson’s Mills. Profiting by Ripley’s discomfiture the previous evening, Gregg determined to cross



the swamp some distance higher up, while engaging the enemy's attention in front. At the moment, therefore, that the engagement opened on his right,—fully convinced he had nought to fear from any force sent from Beaver Dam Creek to operate on his right flank,—he crossed the greater part of his command a mile above the battery, and screened them in the timber; then posting a cloud of skirmishers in front of the guns to draw their fire and annoy the enemy's supports, the word was given. Our artillery opened fire, and at the same instant our infantry rushed in from the rear and seized the work; others, ascending the rising road, poured into the Federal camp, and subjected the enemy to a destructive two-sided fire, while shells poured thick and fast on their line of retreat. Gregg displayed his usual judgment in this brilliant affair, and his success doubtless expedited matters at Beaver Dam Creek.

It was now past 8 A.M., and since both routes were open, troops began to move in strong columns, shouting and yelling vigorously as they passed the positions, and saw guns, prisoners, and stores strewn on every side, with fatigued, dusty, and ragged brigades resting in the shade. "Time" was evidently an object with General Lee; he knew M'Clellan had endeavoured to force Porter into an energetic resistance thus far, so as to gain time to protect his centre on the north bank, situated in the neighbourhood of Gaine's Mill, near the river. Cavalry scouts were therefore rapidly pushed ahead, and infantry followed, batteries being at hand to withstand any sudden exhibition of force, and open the fight, should the enemy feel desirous of trying the

fortunes of war in any of the very large open farms intervening between us and Gaine's property. Ellyson's Mills and Beaver Dam Creek were, in fact, the impediments thrown out to obstruct our advance; and, though brilliantly fought actions, were simply considered as preliminary to others of greater importance within a few hours' march.

The advance, therefore, was prosecuted with vigour, and it was scarcely 9 A.M. ere the several divisions were rapidly approaching the enemy. General Ambrose Hill was in the centre, bearing towards Coal Harbour; Generals Longstreet and A. P. Hill proceeded along the edge of the Chickahominy on the right, while Jackson was still far to the left, threatening the enemy's right rear as he gradually converged towards the river. In this order the three columns proceeded through the country towards Gaine's Mill, but were frequently halted and formed in line to invite a combat with the enemy in fair open ground. They would not accept our frequent challenges, however, but slowly retired through the woods, feeling confident in the strength of their position at the mill.

Arriving at Hogan's plantation, one and a half miles west of the mill, General Lee took up temporary quarters there, while the columns of Ambrose Hill and Longstreet halted in the open to await the arrival of Jackson's right at New Coal Harbour.

Unacquainted as I was with the country, I had several narrow escapes from horse pickets stationed on roads that ran through dense woods: more than once I ran the gauntlet of their pistol shots; until, being

by no means inclined to offer my life a sacrifice motives of curiosity, I returned to our advance line scattered through the timber, and hitched my horse among scores of others round Hogan's house. Here Lee, Longstreet, and a crowd of dignitaries were gathered in council upon the doorsteps and grass sward, and as I had never before seen so many of our generals together, I amused myself by making such observations as I could; solacing myself with a smoke, and in the meantime studying an interesting chapter in physiognomy.

## CHAPTER IX.

The Week's Campaign before Richmond, continued—Battle of Gaine's Mill—Sketches of the Generals previous to the Battle—Position of Jackson—Advance of Wilcox, Featherstone, and Pryor—The Centre under Ambrose Hill—The Texan Brigade brought into Action—M'Clellan's Infantry Charge—Defeat of his Right Wing and Centre—The Field of Battle—Capture of Guns and Booty—Death of Major Wheat—Confederates in Striped Pantaloons.

HOGAN'S residence, Lee's temporary quarters, was not far from the river, and I could distinctly see our batteries and troops at Garnett's farm (Magruder's quarters) on the south bank, and in a direct line across. It was now about 1 P.M., and as we had full possession of both banks thus far, several couriers rode over to Magruder, and one of his heavy batteries immediately opened upon the woods on the north bank, about a mile to our immediate front, in order to clear the way for our further advance. Our skirmishers were far ahead, popping away in the timber, and in addition to this evidence, the occasional discharge of field-pieces told we were gradually working towards Gaine's Mill. The enemy had abandoned a fine field-work in Hogan's orchard, and several other important structures still closer to the river. This house was badly shattered by our shot and shell, and seemed to be very shaky ; in the upper

rooms we saw large stains of blood, near where a shell had entered; we were told by prisoners that McClellan had used the place occasionally in his journeys along the lines, and that on one occasion, while all were in bed, a shell came whizzing across, and cleared its way completely through the walls, killing one aide-de-camp and severely wounding another! Be this as it may, *some* were killed at this spot during our frequent artillery duels; the out-houses bore every appearance of having been used for hospitals, while numerous mounds of earth spoke of sepulture.

The whole yard and orchard were now occupied by general officers, aides, couriers, and prisoners. Lee sat in the south portico absorbed in thought. He was neatly dressed in a dark blue uniform, buttoned to the throat; his fine calm open countenance and grey hair would have tempted an artist to sketch him in this thoughtful attitude. Longstreet sat in an old garden chair, at the foot of the steps, under shady trees, busily engaged in disposing of a lunch of sandwiches. With his feet thrown against a tree, he presented a true type of the hardy campaigner; his once grey uniform had changed to brown, and many a button was missing; his riding-boots were dusty and worn, but his pistols and sabre had a bright polish by his side, while his charger stood near anxiously looking at him, as if expecting a morsel of bread and meat. Though the day was warm, the general's coat was buttoned up as well as it could be, and as he ate and conversed freely with those around him, it was evident that his sandy beard, moustaches, and half-bald head had latterly had but distant dealings with a

barber. He is a little above medium height, thick-set, inclined to obesity, and has a small inquiring blue eye; though thoughtful and slow of motion, he is remarkably industrious. He was a major in the U. S. army, and being absent in the south-west when the rebellion opened, he hurried on to the scene of action, and has greatly distinguished himself. He appears to be about thirty-five or forty years of age, and is now Major-General C.S.A. Of his frequent successes much is said in the course of this narrative.

Maxy Gregg sits his horse in the shade conversing with a few about the affair at Ellyson's Mills, and seems a very modest, quiet gentleman, of about fifty. His hair is grey; he has full whiskers and moustaches, and a ruddy complexion; in person, he is thick-set, of medium height, and is jocular in his manner. His uniform looked the worse for wear; even the three stars upon his throat being dingy and ragged, while his common black felt hat would not bring half a dollar at any place in times of peace. But he is well mounted and armed, and keeps an eye on General Lee, by whom he expects to be called at any moment. He is a famous lawyer of South Carolina, and when the United States were at war with Mexico, President Polk offered him the majorship of the first additional regiment of regulars which was then being raised. He served during that campaign, but achieved no distinction until the affair of Vienna, when he successfully smashed up a Dutch general's reconnaissance on the railroad, as narrated in another place. Gregg is called! he leans his head through a window and converses with Lee, but trots away as if dissatisfied;

"There goes Gregg," some one remarks, "looking as black as thunder because not appointed to the advance."

Wilcox, Pryor, and Featherstone are also present, conversing freely and gaily, as if about to start upon some pleasant "picnic." The latter is a long-bodied, eagle-faced, quiet man of thirty-five years, without moustaches or whiskers, with a prominent Roman nose and compressed lips; he leans forward uneasily in his saddle, and with his downcast eyes appears very thoughtful; but he is a desperate, unflinching man when once aroused. He seems to take little notice of complimentary remarks regarding the action at Beaver Dam Creek in the morning, but is absorbed and anxious for the work assigned him. He is a thorough soldier, and when commanding the 17th Mississippi drilled his battalion thrice a day through all the heat of summer, apparently enjoying the exercise more than any. At Leesburg he led his regiment in the last charge, and drove many of the enemy into the river. He is a lawyer and politician of note in Mississippi, very careless of dress, and very blunt in his manner.

Having received orders, Wilcox, Featherstone, and Pryor ride off at a gallop, and some prophesy that the advance will soon begin. Besides these and other generals, there are a few civilians present, chiefly land-owners in the neighbourhood, who have come to see the havoc perpetrated by General Sykes' regulars who were encamped around here. A courier comes galloping forward, delivers his papers to Lee, who soon after mounts, and with Longstreet and staffs proceeds to New Coal Harbour, where it is said Jackson's right

wing has already arrived. Magruder's guns have stopped their cannonade, and the advance begins, through the woods towards Gaine's Mills.

Jackson was in position at New Coal Harbour on the left, and Ambrose Hill in the centre; it now devolved on Longstreet and D. H. Hill to move forward and get into position on our right. With skirmishers thrown out in the woods, Longstreet moved cautiously forward, and drove in the enemy's outposts as he proceeded. Halting in the woods, west of Gaine's house, Pryor's column was sent forward about 3 p.m. to clear the woods and river-bank, south of Gaine's house, of a force stationed there to annoy us. After this was accomplished, and the enemy driven across a creek eastward, and at right angles with the river (running here east and west), part of Longstreet's force left the woods and halted around Gaine's house, beyond range of the enemy, on rising ground to the north.

To facilitate a full conception of this heavy and obstinate battle, let the following suffice in lieu of maps.

The reader is requested to imagine a large field, more than a mile square. The north-eastern and north-western quarters will represent high flat lands, with the Federal force occupying the north-eastern quarter, backed by woods. A creek, which runs from the north to the Chickahominy, forms the southern boundary of this supposed square. The Federal cannon command the north-eastern quarter, which is flat and level, as also the south-eastern and south-western quarters, which are considerably lower. In the south-western corner stands Gaine's House and Mills, by which we approach on a



road that ascends north-eastwardly to the centre of the field, runs through M'Clellan's position, and terminates in the north-eastern corner. A road also comes into the field at the north-western corner, and it was at this point (New Coal Harbour) that Jackson arrived. A line drawn due east and west will represent a broad brook running eastward into the creek to the rear of the Federals; but the only wood in this square field borders this brook from the centre point running due west, being a steep and timbered ascent on to the plateau of the north-western corner. In a word, it might be said the north-eastern and north-western quarters are much higher than the south-eastern and south-western quarters; the latter *much* lower, and all ascent to the north-western quarter debarred by a broad brook, with timbered land abruptly rising at the back. With cannon on the north-eastern corner, where the enemy stood in line of battle, they swept the other three quarters; but to prevent the passage of the brook and woods, the common boundary of the north and south-western quarters, a strong breastwork overlooked the brook in the woods, while through the timber, and up the hill, rose many rifle pits, and above all some dozen pieces of artillery, placed on the edge of this belt of timber, covering the breastworks, rifle-pits, &c., and sweeping all approach from Gaine's Mills in the south-western quarter. This brook and wooded hill was also the front of the north-western quarter, so that all approach to the enemy was over such difficulties, while several field-works were erected on the line due north and east to prevent all flanking movements in that direction.

McClellan's position was admirably chosen, and well fortified. To defend it he had brought over many troops from the south bank (his south centre) by bridges not more than a mile distant, protected from all attack by a strongly fortified camp and hill in the south-eastern corner of the field, its foot being washed by the creek before mentioned, which empties here into the Chickahominy. When Longstreet's and D. H. Hill's division, therefore, debouched from the woods near the Mills in the south-western quarter, the glitter of bayonets made the Federals plainly visible in battle array on the high grounds of the north-eastern quarter. A few shells were thrown at the head of our column, but without doing hurt, and not a shot was fired from the belt of timber crowning the ascent from the centre, west, and north-western boundaries of the plateau. The enemy wished us to suppose that the passage to the north-western quarter would be undisputed, and that all they desired was a fair, open fight, when we reached the plateau.

It was now 4 P.M. and Ambrose Hill having opened the fight to the left, Pryor, Wilcox, and Featherstone moved through the woods to the west. Having got sufficiently under the hill to prevent loss from shells thrown from the north-eastern quarter, each commander gathered his troops well together, gave the word, "File right, double quick!" and under a storm of lead from the hill, ran eastward, parallel with the brook, gave the word, "By the left flank—double quick!" and in less than three minutes Wilcox on the right, Featherstone in the centre, and Pryor on the left, were rushing along the open towards the brook. Here, having descended

the "dip," they jumped into the brook, and tumbling or clambering over logs and brushwood, found themselves confronted by a heavy force of the enemy who were posted behind a long breastwork, and in rifle-pits on higher ground to the rear.

The manner of our approach was the best that could be devised, for had these brigades marched in the fields, instead of creeping through the woods and hollows, to the west of this "rise," few would have survived the hailstorm which awaited them. By cautiously approaching at right angles with the brook, until near it, giving the word, "File right, double quick," until each had got into position in line, and then, "By the left flank—double quick!" it brought the brigades directly under the rising ground, protected from the fire of the northeastern quarter; and by rapidly moving, they got so near the brook, that cannon on the rise to the rear could not be depressed sufficiently to hit, without killing their own men, who were now hand to hand with ours at the brook, and obstinately defending their line of breastworks.

In such a position, and on such broken ground, officers saw it would be impossible to ride, and as many horses had been shot in the morning at Beaver Dam Creek, Wilcox, Featherstone, Pryor, and other officers, left their steeds in the woods, where they had been quietly drawn up since 2 P.M.; and when orders came to advance, they buttoned up their coats, pressed down their hats, drew their swords, and dashed forward on foot, giving the word of command in tones which were audible amid the roar of musketry. Though many fell

in the rush while "fling right" from the woods, and "by the left flank" across the open, down the "dip" to the brook, none faltered; ranks closed up as soon as broken, and each brigade seemed emulous of the others in keeping a straight and unbroken front, as if executing "double quick" movements in a divisional drill.

There was much confusion at the brook, which had been deepened and made still more difficult by every impediment that could be devised. But, once across, our men scaled the wooden and earthen line of wall that overlooked it, and were soon desperately engaged with masses of infantry, who retired up the hill and kept up a deafening roar of musketry against our farther advance. The situation was critical, but while our skirmishers "fanned out" in front, and from behind every tree fired into whole regiments before them, lines were re-formed, and cheers told of our continued progress. The enemy's skirmishers, concealed in bushes, disputed the ground inch by inch, while an unbroken line behind them on higher ground fired upon us, over the heads of their sharpshooters. In fact, there were "three tiers" of combatants opposed to our advance,—first a dense body of skirmishers; next, a few yards to the rear, and on higher ground, an unbroken line of battle; and, thirdly, still farther behind, and on the edge of the unwooded plateau, a line of cannon, which, depressed as much as possible, fairly shaved our heads, blew off our caps, and broke our bayonet points! "Warm work, this!" one of the generals remarked, as he ran in our rear towards the right, with a regiment to meet a flanking force entering the woods from the north-eastern plateau—

“Warm work, colonel, but push them hard, sir, for everything depends on *us*.” This admonition was not necessary to stir up our men, for they knew that fewer would fall from rushing to “close quarters” than by advancing slowly, and firing from “long law.”

Accordingly, the word rang out from wing to wing: “Forward, march!” and, with indescribable yells, the advance began. The woods were soon completely filled with smoke, so much so that the position of the enemy could only be ascertained by the sudden flashes of light across our front. Standing erect, our men would reply with a deliberate volley, at fifty yards; rush forward, crouch and load, while the return volley swept over our heads, and cart-loads of leaves and branches cut by the storm well-nigh buried us. Our men in return aimed up-hill, but sufficiently low, at the line of legs just visible under the smoke; and such was the precision of fire, that as we steadily advanced, we had to stride over bodies which lay just as they had fallen, in regular line, but seldom with the faces turned towards us. The destructiveness of our fire far surpassed anything I have ever witnessed; but owing to the Indian or Zouave style of fighting instinctively adopted by our men—viz. of standing erect, taking deliberate aim, and firing; instantly bending low, or crawling several yards to the front; rapidly loading, waiting for a “return;” and judging of distance by the line of legs visible under the dense vapour, which did not fall within two feet of the ground—our casualties were unaccountably few, and those were of men mostly shot in the hand or arm, owing to the overshooting of the enemy.

So far I have described the progress of the battle under Wilcox, Featherstone, and Pryor, the result being that the enemy are gradually falling back through the woods to the plateau in the north-eastern and north-western corners of the field. But at the same time Ambrose Hill was vigorously pushing the centre of the enemy's line, and some of Jackson's forces had come into action on the left, from New Coal Harbour, by the road approaching the field in the north-western corner. Being driven from the woods and up the hill on to the plateau by our right and centre, the enemy fell back, and immediately threw forward a heavy force of artillery, which swept the open fields and tore down the edge of the captured woods in which our forces were resting and re-forming.

Fatigued and torn as we were, work more desperate was yet in store for us. In the north-eastern corner of the field heavy masses of infantry stood in admirable order about half a mile distant. It was easy to see from the array of shining bayonets, the waving banners, and the perfect circle of artillery flame rapidly shelling north and south-west, that before we could advance through their still standing camps many thousands would inevitably fall. Ambrose Hill attempted to move forward in the centre, but his division, thoroughly exhausted by hard marching and constant fighting, was unequal to the task, and was withdrawn in favour of Whiting's division of Texans, Alabamians, and Mississippians. The troops of the two latter States had succoured Pryor on the left, and had been actively engaged since the combat opened, but the Texan Brigade was held in

reserve, and as this was the first "great fight" in which they had participated in Virginia, a desperate part was assigned them to act.

While dispositions were being made for the final struggle, the sun sank upon the scene, and perhaps mistaking the cause of our inactivity, M'Clellan moved up heavy masses of infantry to drive us from the woods. Their advance was beautiful, and as they came on in unbroken line, with colours waving, and men cheering, a thrill of admiration was felt by all. When within a hundred yards, our men, who lay close to the ground in the edge of the timber, received the volley, and rose to their feet at a "ready!" The Federal commanders then sprang to the front, and led on their men to the "charge!" They advanced a few yards in unbroken line,—a few paces nearer their line began to waver, and swayed from wing to wing like a curving wave, and ere they recovered from the apparent indecision, our whole line delivered an accurate and deadly volley. Then high above the roll of musketry might be heard the yell of our men, as dashing headlong through their own smoke, they fell upon the disorganized masses of the enemy, bayoneting, pistolling, and knifing, in the wildest manner—driving them in the utmost confusion through their camps, seizing many guns, and approaching within a few yards of the cannon hastily thrown forward to cover the fugitive masses.

As yet not a single piece of our artillery had been brought into action, and as the lands were flat and open, their guns opened upon us with redoubled fury; the right of their lines was still held by powerful earthworks,

and our right exposed to a flank movement. This was attempted by the enemy, but Ambrose Hill, in withdrawing from the centre, had marched by our rear, and lay in wait, under cover of the conquered strip of woods, so that when their forces appeared on our right, Hill rose up to meet them. They were apparently astonished, and while engaged in re-forming their lines, and bringing forward fresh forces, their right was assailed with great fury by our left, and at the same time Jackson's main force, assured of our victory, was rapidly marching through the country to their right and rear.

The absence of artillery sorely perplexed us, and particularly on our left, where the Federal cannon were sweeping all approach with canister and grape, playing north and south-west. Several regiments had been thrown forward to capture these pieces, but having proceeded some distance were exhausted and baffled by the enemy changing position and gradually retreating. Occasionally rising to their feet, our thinned and bleeding regiments staggered forward a short distance farther, and suffering severely, again fell on their faces, and picked off scores of cannoniers, completely unmanning several guns. When charged by cavalry, our men, without forming square, closed up their broken files, and received the enemy with such unerring aim that they never essayed to gallop down upon us again. Their infantry next appeared, but, without waiting for them, our men rushed forward and fired, which caused them to retreat in unmanageable confusion. Again and again their artillery opened fire, and it was evident they were gradually preparing to retreat.



Suddenly their movements were accelerated. A wild shout arose to the rear!—on came the Texan Brigade at a run, the officers in front, charging among their redoubts and guns: soon their right was broken, and while desperately engaged against great odds, the whole line closed up, and a hand-to-hand conflict ensued at all points! Clouds of dust, woods smoking on every hand, long lines of musketry fire, the deafening roar of artillery, and piercing yells, arose on every hand, while the dark, dense mass of the enemy slowly retired through their camps, across the creek and through the woods in the north-eastern corner of the field; the bursting of caissons, and the explosion of ammunition waggons, lighting up the scene on every hand.

But while Whiting, Hood,\* Archer,† Pryor, Wilcox, Featherstone, Ambrose Hill, and others, were hurling their commands at the stubborn enemy, and rapidly capturing guns, munitions and prisoners at every turn, the distant roar of cannon several miles away to our front breaks upon the ear. News is soon brought that

---

\* General John B. Hood is from Tennessee, and was for some time in the old army, but resigned and followed the legal profession in his native State. When hostilities commenced he was among the first to take the field, and was appointed colonel of the 4th Texan Infantry, and subsequently placed in command of the Texan Brigade, which consisted of the 1st, 4th, and 5th Texas, 18th Georgia, and Hampton's Legion. He led the brigade on foot in the famous charge of the batteries, and rendered his name for ever famous. He is a splendid-looking, dignified man of about forty-five years, possessing a melodious and powerful voice, and has the look of a dashing officer, and is much beloved. He now ranks as major-general.

† Brig.-Gen. Jas. J. Archer was appointed by the U.S. captain of Volunteers, April 9th, 1847, and these being disbanded, was promoted captain 9th Infantry, March 3rd, 1855. He is from Maryland, a good officer, and commands a fine brigade.

Jackson in person is breaking the enemy's line of retreat towards their fortified camps on the north bank of the Chickahominy, and that he has already captured several thousand prisoners, including cannon, waggons, and officers of all ranks.

Thus at 8 P.M., Friday, June 27th, the battle of Gaine's Mill was over, and the victory was ours!

Couriers and generals and regiments moving to and fro, told that the enemy were to be hard pushed, and in anticipation of fresh hostilities on the morrow, nothing was to be left undone which might annihilate the right wing and centre, which had been opposed to us. It was obvious indeed, from the roar of musketry to our front, and southward across the creek, that we were driving the enemy closely towards their fortified hills and camps on the banks of the Chickahominy, yet McClellan might even make a second attempt to maintain possession of the north bank, under cover of his numerous fortifications, which were still untouched. These could be seen, not more than a mile distant, with camp-fires burning; while rockets ascending in the star-lit sky, were communicating with Heinzelman and the left wing before Richmond, on the south bank.

The field was rich in booty. I myself counted fifteen magnificent brass and bronze field-pieces, pointed south-west and north-west, with caissons and horses and dozens of cannoniers, exactly as they were left by the vanquished owners. Camps, clothing, thousands of prisoners, and immense quantities of small arms, banners, drums, and other appurtenances of war, were gathered in a few hours, while most of the troops lay

fast asleep where they had halted, many using a dead Federal for a pillow! The destruction was awful; and if many guns fell into our hands, heaps of blue-jackets round them told that they had been heroically defended. Many horses were shot; and the enemy, finding themselves unable to carry off the pieces, had deliberately cut the throats of the uninjured animals to prevent them falling into our hands. In fact, several artillerymen were caught in this inhuman act, and bayoneted upon the spot. The ground round the cannon was dyed purple. Judging from the placid countenances of many, I thought they were only sleeping; but on closer inspection invariably discovered a small hole in the side of the head, made by the unerring bullet of our sharpshooters!

Two old farm-houses—one in the north-eastern and another in the north-western quarter—had been converted into field-hospitals, and when I passed, the large yards were covered with Yankees, many of their own surgeons attending them. Our loss seemed to be in wounded, but theirs in dead! Though we had much the worse position, and no cannon to assist, the numbers of their dead, particularly in the woods, surpassed all I could have believed. The timber was literally crowded with blue-jackets, and regiments which had won those positions could scarcely find sufficient ground on which to bivouack, without trampling upon the poor creatures strewn in all directions. The groans of the wounded were heartrending, yet our men lit fires, and cooked their suppers as unconcerned as if nought had happened, while not ten paces from them they could not step without treading upon some dead or wounded

enemy. Generals, colonels, and regiments were scattered through the timber, all engaged in [boiling water or cooking bacon on pronged sticks, while ambulances and carriages were slowly moving to and fro all night, carrying off the wounded and bumping against some inanimate carcase in the darkness. "Hospital corps," litter-bearers and others, were everywhere busy, while now and then a sufferer would pass in a blood-stained blanket, carried by six companions in solemn procession, a seventh leading the way through the] woods with burning brands or lanterns. Ammunition waggons were busily engaged in distributing cartridge for the morrow, while artillerymen were cleaning the captured guns, and the movements of couriers delivering orders, the tramp of troops, and the rumble of artillery, bespoke active operations in the morning. Spades were everywhere in request for interring the dead; comrades, pipe in mouth, consigned their relations to the humble grave without tears or words, while a few, more thoughtful, lingered by the camp-fires and talked of the incidents of battle.

Among the many who perished on this occasion, none was more regretted than Major Robert Wheat, who had gloriously fallen while charging at the head of his Louisiana Battalion. All regretted the death of this valiant soldier, and many a stout heart was wrung with anguish when it was whispered, "Poor Wheat is gone!" "Bury me on the battle-field, boys!" said he, expiring beneath a majestic oak, surrounded by his weather-beaten Spartan heroes—"the field is ours, as usual, my boys—bury me on the battle-field!" He was interred

beneath the lonely, wide-spreading oak, where he had fallen, and as his face in death was lit by torches, generals and privates flocked to see the manly form of one whose voice and sabre had led in so many dangerous encounters, and who died without thanks from those who should have delighted to acknowledge his merit by promotion.

Colonels gone; captains, lieutenants, and scores of privates gone; captains commanding regiments, and sergeants companies! Such was the state of things at Gaine's Mills, but none had faltered. Files were ploughed down by grape-shot and shell, yet brigadiers and colonels on foot in front waved their caps and swords—the only word heard above the din of battle was “Forward!” and amid hailstorms of lead the men “closed up” without a word, and annihilated the enemy's ranks with murderous volleys at short distances, closing with the foe, and scattering them in all directions. Regiments thus engaged suffered severely as a matter of course, yet it was impossible to estimate our loss at more than a third or fourth that of the enemy.

While roaming over the field gazing on the heaps of slain, I counted not less than ten Federal standard-bearers who had been laid in a small ditch in one of their camps. I knew them to be such by the leathern belts used for carrying the colours, and could not but remark that several were shot in the head and body by numerous balls, as if an entire volley had been fired at them. They were fine, well-developed, muscular fellows, and lay in death with closed hands as if the colours had been torn from them. The branch-covered huts scattered

all round were filled with dead, and our men were quietly reposing in the rudely-made bunks, while the proprietors, doubtless, in many cases, were stretched in death but a few feet distant.

As soon as the camps had fallen into our hands, and the enemy had retreated, our men laid violent hands on whatever food or clothing they discovered. They were so thoughtless in this respect that I saw many of them attired in suits of Yankee clothing, so that it was oftentimes difficult to distinguish between them and our prisoners. I could not blame the poor fellows for securing clothing of some kind; the greater number of them were ragged and dirty, and wearing-apparel could not be obtained at any price in Richmond. It was grotesque to see a tall, well-developed Southerner attired in clothes much too small, but the men themselves were delighted with the change, and strutted about with gold-corded shoulder-straps and striped pantaloons, often not sufficiently long to cover the ankle. I forbore making unpleasant remarks about the danger of wearing such clothes: several of our men were shot in consequence; venturing beyond the lines, they were mistaken for enemies, and before explanations could be offered, were laid lifeless.

## CHAPTER X.

Retrospect—Additional Particulars from one of Stuart's Cavalry—Capture of Depôts and Stores during the Action—Public Feeling at Richmond—M'Clellan begins his Retreat to the James River—Operations on the South Bank of the Chickahominy—Commencement of the Pursuit—The Railway Merrimac—Difficult Nature of the Country.

AT break of day I was sent to the capital, and had to pass over the greater part of the battle-field. Turning with a sickening sensation from the sight of bloodshed and the hundreds of inanimate bodies which lay on every hand, I galloped off towards Gaine's House, and felt much relieved with the refreshing air. The lofty Federal camp beyond the creek, on the edge of the Chickahominy, in the south-eastern quarter of the field, was still standing, and so many tents crowned the hill that it seemed as if it were still occupied; but this fact was being ascertained by six pieces of our artillery, which were rapidly shelling it, without eliciting a reply. Leaving the field, and plunging into the woods, I rode at a rapid rate towards Hogan's House, overtaking and meeting ambulances, private carriages, omnibuses, and other vehicles, all engaged in errands of mercy. I could have turned to the left and crossed the Chickahominy near Hogan's House,

which would have taken me to Magruder's quarters at Garnett's Farm, seven miles from Richmond; but as my orders led me on the north bank to Mechanicsville, and thence to town, I had excellent opportunities for viewing the route taken by our army.

The quarters of General Sykes had been in a house near Hogan's, and among other things, a friend handed me several Northern illustrated papers brimful of "Federal victories" extravagantly sketched. The large open fields around were the camping and drill grounds of Porter's large force of "regular" infantry and artillery. The retreat had been conducted with much order, and comparatively few stores fell into our hands; the enemy having burned them beforehand, together with many waggons, the ashes of which were still smoking. Passing on towards Beaver Dam Creek, deserted encampments were visible in the woods on either side of the road, among which I strolled for some time, observing that they contained many valuable medicines, which, together with other useful things, were under guard.

Beaver Dam Creek and Ellyson's Mills were totally deserted, and except for a few wounded men limping about, a stranger would not have recognized these places as the scenes of the terrible struggle in the twilight of Friday morning. The hot sun presently made us aware that there were bodies in the woods not yet buried, and, although parties were at work here and there, it was several days ere all the putrefying matter was covered. The neighboring houses were badly shattered by shot and shell, and in many instances



nothing remained but a solitary and shaky chimney of brickwork. Mechanicsville was converted into one vast hospital; many citizens, old and young, satisfied their curiosity by lounging about the breastworks, or idly gazing on the crowds of prisoners passing on their way to Richmond. As I trotted over the wooden bridge which had been held by my old regiment, imagination began to picture the straits to which M'Clellan had been reduced by the generalship of that modest and unassuming professor of the Christian religion—Robert E. Lee!

Maintaining his front unbroken, and parallel with theirs on the Chickahominy until Jackson should appear at Hanover Court-house, threatening their right and rear, Lee rapidly masses his troops on our left wing. Branch at the same time crosses the stream at Brook Church Bridge, drives the foe past Meadow Bridge, where Ambrose Hill instantly crosses, joins forces and uncovers the front of Mechanicsville Bridge, where Longstreet and D. H. Hill cross and join forces. Marching by three routes, Mechanicsville, Ellyson's Mills, and Beaver Dam Creek successively fall, and the enemy is vigorously pushed to Gaine's Mill, where Jackson joins us and completely routs their entire right wing, and pierces their centre *from the rear!* Driven across the river, M'Clellan's right and right centre are doubled up in the low swampy lands, behind his left centre and left. But now that he has his whole force on the south bank, and has lost all communication with his depôts on the York River, will he, in desperation, taking advantage of the presence of our heavy forces

on the north bank, concentrate and hurl his entire strength against our right, and endeavour to seize Richmond before we can recross to repel the attack? This would be a bold stroke, but it would take more time to prepare for such a movement than Lee will grant, and even if he did essay such a feat, our defences and force are sufficient to hold him in check until our left could cross and take him in the rear. He is thoroughly aware of our style of fighting by this time, and would not hazard his existence in such an enterprise, and will undoubtedly retreat towards the James River.

Such was the current of my thoughts when the clattering of hoofs behind induced me to turn, and I saw it was an old friend attached to Stuart's cavalry, who had participated in all the adventures of his dashing chief. His news interested me.

As soon as Ambrose Hill had taken Mechanicsville, and Jackson's advance through the country had cut off the Federal communication with their depôts on the Pamunkey and the head of York River, Stuart had been ordered to advance rapidly and secure whatever was possible ere the enemy had time to destroy it. On Thursday, therefore, he moved down the Branch turnpike, and proceeded towards the Pamunkey, where his presence was least expected or desirable, as large quantities of all kinds of stores were piled ready for burning. As Porter was not then defeated, the order had not arrived for their destruction, so that Stuart captured scores of horses, waggons, ambulances, and immense supplies of every kind, besides several hundred

prisoners. My informant, who was there, expressed great surprise at the extensive depôts captured, and stated that vast quantities of ammunition, many weapons, and several cannon fell into our hands. Having properly secured all these invaluables, Stuart destroyed half-a-dozen schooners, having first seized the cargoes: several others slipped cables and escaped. Proceeding through the country, every Federal establishment was visited, large or small, and everything of value appropriated. At the head of York River much United States' property was taken, and waggon-loads destroyed for want of transportation; but among the most singular discoveries made, was that of great quantities of dry goods and groceries, held by private individuals, who were waiting for M'Clellan's triumphal entry into Richmond to transport their stocks, and philanthropically open business to feed the hungry and clothe the naked rebels! It was difficult to convince the owners of such valuables that M'Clellan was beaten, for they laughed at such an idea and thought us all mad; but when marched to town, and accommodated with lodgings in our tobacco-warehouses, in company with hundreds of men in uniform, their astonishment was amazing. Yet such was the implicit reliance of the North in M'Clellan's promises of "pushing us to the wall," possessing Richmond "in six days," and daily editions of "victories" &c., printed in the *Herald*, *Times*, and *Tribune*, that many large houses sent confidential agents to Richmond to effect sales a few days *before* the time assigned for his entry into our capital, so that they might secure the cream of the market in sales or barter. That such was

really the case, is proved by the fact that several of these agents made their way from Washington *viâ* Gordonsville and Lynchburg, and were nearly choked with vexation when arrested in Richmond, and compelled to see hundreds of Federal prisoners pass the windows of rooms in which they and other "commercial travellers" were confined!

Expecting to hear our guns open every moment, I felt uneasy in town, and was desirous of getting out to camp again as soon as possible. The people of Richmond, however, seemed perfectly easy in their minds, and carried on their usual avocations with the utmost unconcern. Many stores in the principal streets were converted into comfortable hospitals, while crowds stood round the doors reading the list of inmates, parents hoping to find the names of their sons, and other relatives or friends anxious to be informed of the fate of those dear to them. These lists were of great service, for the sufferers were deposited in whichever infirmary was nearest, there being no such thing as State or regimental hospitals. Business of all kinds was brisk: waggons, carts, carriages, and ambulances were passing and repassing in long lines through every thoroughfare, while grey-haired gentlemen "button-holed" each other at street corners, or gathered round any horseman who seemed to have lately arrived from the field. Cavalry-men galloping towards the War Office always awakened interest, and I saw several couriers encircled by a crowd of idle questioners, and so pestered with inquiries that they could not dismount to breakfast for a full half-hour. Squads of prisoners,

under mounted escort, were passing to and fro; in front of tobacco-warehouses, just opened for their reception, long lines of prisoners stood in single file, having their names registered before entry, while the rooms and windows of all the stories were crowded with men from every branch of the service.

Hitching my horse to a lamp-post, I went into a restaurant and called for a few eggs and a small steak; for which, together with a cup of warm "rye" coffee, I was charged 5 dols. only! Mounting again, I lit a cigar, cursed all extortioners and usurers, and was soon on my way down the Nine Mile Road, determining to reach Gaine's Mill by passing the Chickahominy near Magruder's quarters at Garnett's Farm. When I arrived—about 10 A.M.—Magruder was about to make an attack on the enemy's left centre, not more than a mile distant, and standing on one of the breastworks I could plainly see their immense line of fortifications, from which they kept up a continual discharge of shells. The 7th and 8th Georgia had been sent down to attack this mammoth battery, which swept both sides of the railroad; they had driven in the outposts, and under a murderous fire, jumped into the battery; but other places to the rear opened upon them, rendering it impossible to stay there, so that they were withdrawn with considerable loss. What Magruder meant in attacking this stronghold with such a small force, unsupported, none could imagine. It was now certain that the enemy were all on the south bank, and in greater force at this point (their left centre) than anywhere else; hence, to make any impression at all,

required heavy forces. If this was merely a diversion, the thing is explained, but Magruder evidently did not look upon it in that light, for, surrounded as he was by his own and Governor Letcher's staff, he rode about in a great fume, swearing and cursing like one half-tipsy. Nothing more was attempted during Saturday at this important point, and, except skirmishing among the pickets, all was quiet along our right, held by M'Laws, Huger, and others.

As the day advanced, it became known that M'Clellan had withdrawn all his forces from the north bank, and that their camps had fallen into our hands. To prevent any attempts to force our right, Longstreet and the Hills recrossed their divisions from Gaine's Mill, and began to march to the rear of Magruder and Huger's forces, taking up the line of march on the Charles City and Darbytown roads in the direction of James River, so as to come up with the enemy in that quarter and bring on an engagement. Early on Sunday morning it was ascertained that they were in strong force to our right, on a plain of pines at a place called Frazier's Farm, about eighteen miles from Richmond (three miles from James River and their gunboats), occupying a line with a six miles' front, in a swampy, thickly-timbered, and irregular country. To ascertain their true whereabouts, Lee sent the 1st North Carolina Cavalry to reconnoitre, who plunged into their camps at break of day, and galloping to and fro in all directions, lost many men. Early on Sunday morning, also, Mississippi and Louisiana pickets at Magruder's and Huger's front were attacked in force, but instead of giving ground, drove

the enemy down the roads and through the woods, into and past their breastworks, and found them to be deserted. Far from profiting by this discovery, and commencing the pursuit, these generals allowed the foe to pass across their front, instead of piercing his line of retreat by advancing down the Nine Mile Road, the railroad, and the Williamsburg road, which would have cut these forces of the enemy into so many fragments. Thus, strong forces were allowed to pass unmolested from the left to the right of the enemy, which were halted at Frazier's Farm and Malvern Hill, and caused much trouble and unnecessary destruction of life afterwards.

On Sunday afternoon, however (twelve hours after the vacation of the enemy's breastworks had been announced by pickets), Magruder began to move down the road in pursuit, and met with little resistance. Long lines of casemated batteries arose on every hand, all approach being protected by rifle-pits, felled timber, and other obstructions, so that it seemed McClellan had been fearful of surprise, and, instead of the "on to Richmond" movement, had prepared for a siege! Large supplies of ammunition and commissary stores were discovered on every hand, and from the number of overcoats, knapsacks, and other articles lying around, it was evident they had 'skedaddled' in a great hurry. In one place I saw four tiers of barrels, fifty yards square, in a blaze, scores of barrels being all strewn around, containing ground coffee, sugar, rice, molasses, salt, tea, crackers, flour, meal, &c., the heads of the barrels being broken and their contents lying on the ground. A little hut used as a post-office and news-depôt contained

papers, letters, U.S. mail-bags, account-hooks, stationery and similar things, but everywhere the torch had been applied, so that as our troops advanced in line of battle they marched over red smouldering ashes.\*

While our troops were thus cautiously advancing through the deserted camps, a strange phenomenon came into sight on the line of railroad from Richmond. Mr. Pearce (Government ship-builder) had constructed an iron-clad one-gun battery on the framework of a freight truck; the front and sides being cased with thick iron plates, having timber inside eighteen inches thick, the sides and front slanting towards the top, which was open. A 32-pound rifle had its mouth through an embrasure in front, a well-protected locomotive shoving it forward, the driver being protected by a surrounding wall of cotton bales! Its motion was slow, for the battery weighed some sixty tons, and several shaky wooden bridges had to be crossed. Having arrived at a point where the Nine Mile Road crosses the railroad, General Griffith, of the Mississippi Brigade, was speaking to the engineer, when the enemy fired a shell at it, a fragment of which struck Griffith, and he shortly afterwards expired beneath a tree. The "Railroad Merrimac" instantly advanced, and was soon engaged in dispersing the flying enemy, its large shells exploding right and left in the woods with loud detonations.

Large columns of white sulphurous smoke now rose

---

\* Major Bloomfield, of Magruder's staff, found an immense Federal flag in these camps, which McClellan had received from New-England ladies, to whom he promised that many days should not elapse ere it floated in triumph over the captured capital at Richmond!



up into the sky, their beautiful spiral forms and broad-capped tops looking like mammoth pillars of ivory rising from the dark and distant line of timber. The enemy were destroying ammunition; but to prevent further waste of such valuables, the "Merrimac" ran along towards "Savage Station," and routed several batteries drawn up to oppose its progress. The destruction caused by this single gun was very great; for having arrived within full view of the enemy's retreat, their long lines of waggons and glitter of bayonets presented conspicuous marks for the gunners, who fired constantly on every side, inflicting much loss.

When our infantry arrived at "Savage Station," we found the enemy's rear-guard drawn up to receive us, consisting of Casey's and Sickles' men. Our troops hailed their presence with loud cheers, and commenced the attack with great fury; but the enemy seemed disinclined to prolong the contest to any length, so decamped in great haste, leaving much baggage and valuables behind, including a whole service of silver with the crest and name of "Dan Sickles" engraved thereon. Passing over the disputed ground, our men continued the pursuit until far in the night, when they changed their route towards Frazier's farm, on the south, while Huger continued to advance towards it from the north side.

When the enemy had left their camps on the north side, however, and the Hills, together with Longstreet, had recrossed to reinforce our right, Jackson was left to pursue them on to the south side, and if possible get in their rear, so as to place them between two fires. He endeavoured to cross, but the enemy held the

bridge with much gallantry. Jackson, however, occupied their attention with a vigorous cannonade, while he constructed bridges higher up stream, and thus crossed his force within a few hours, on Sunday afternoon. Thus Jackson was advancing towards the enemy's right flank; Huger in their rear; Longstreet, Magruder, and the Hills on their left flank, while General Holmes was hastily endeavouring to make a long circuit round the latter, and cut off M'Clellan from James River. The whole country occupied and traversed by these moving armies was a mixture of swamp and sand-hills, broken up into numerous brooks, intersected by few roads, and those of such a wretched description that four men could not pass abreast in many places; and being thickly timbered, our advance was slow and tedious—artillery and waggons being far to the rear.

Where the enemy had secreted themselves in this densely timbered and swampy country, none could tell: whether they had sought any of the James River landings, or pushed for the mouth of the Chickahominy, was a matter of speculation, for there were no indications of their whereabouts when we resumed the pursuit on Monday morning (June 30th). It reminded me of hunting a fox among furze-bushes; but the misery of it was, all were obliged to advance slowly, for M'Clellan was still superior to us in force, and it was possible that over-haste might bring us suddenly upon him, drawn up in battle array, before we could arrange our scattered forces for defence.\* Such tedious, slow, fatiguing

---

\* A leading journal remarked on this subject: "Those who have not understood the delay in bringing the retreating M'Clellan to decisive

marching I never before witnessed, over flints, and rocks, or heavy sand; our columns creeping along through the timber, now halting, then advancing, and halting again,—first forming line of battle and then

---

battle, would need no further explanation than a simple view of the scene of operations. The country is level and covered with almost unbroken forests, filled with dense undergrowth, and interspersed with swamps. There are but few places where one can see a hundred yards around him. M'Clellan had therefore admirable opportunities for concealment. It must be borne in mind, also, that his army is very strong and well appointed; and under the pressure now upon them, his men are exhibiting more than their ordinary courage. M'Clellan is doubtless fighting with his best troops and bravest generals, and is exerting the utmost energy, under the most powerful of motives. Under these circumstances it is necessary to be very circumspect, lest our pursuit leads us into a murderous ambuscade, for which such a country affords many opportunities. We have to hunt M'Clellan on each morning, after his night's retreats, as men hunt tigers in their lair and the jungle.

"Hence it is, that for several days past, the morning has been consumed in reconnoitring after the fugitive M'Clellan, and finding out his new position; and the battle that should ensue, has been delayed till evening. Morning returns to find M'Clellan gone again, when a fresh hunt takes place.

"But the danger that M'Clellan may receive such supports as might extricate him from his present dilemma, creates a great desire to see him at once brought to extremity. Already there are rumours that reinforcements have arrived in James River. We doubt much, however, whether effectual help can be brought in time to save him. Our latest Northern papers (June 27th) state that Fremont's, M'Dowell's, and Banks' command are to be consolidated under General Pope, and sent to reinforce M'Clellan. A division of M'Dowell's troops under General M'Call is stated, on the same authority, to have already joined M'Clellan at that date; and this was doubtless true, for M'Call has arrived.

"Our generals fully share the universal desire to put final victory beyond the reach of contingency, by securing it at once, and have put forth their utmost diligence to accomplish this result. Those who murmur at the delay, do but murmur at the wilderness of the Chickahominy and its bogs and swamps. If the deferring of our hopes shall, however, result in the accomplishment of our grand object by the simple blockade of M'Clellan, we shall have occasion to rejoice, that it has occurred. Every additional day multiplies the terror of M'Clellan's condition, and puts him more and more in our power."

resuming the march under a scorching sun, along dusty roads, with clouds of sand getting into the eyes and mouths of the men, who were not allowed to leave the ranks even to get a canteen of water. Sometimes couriers dashed past to the rear, saying, "We've found 'em!"—advanced artillery would throw a few shell; a short silence; and the slow, snail-like motion of our columns would recommence.

It was said the enemy were in force at Frazier's Farm—Huger approached in the rear of this place, and we in front, so that if the fox was found, dispositions seemed perfected for running him down. Fortune, however, is variable, and we had wearily marched far towards evening ere we received any tidings of the ubiquitous M'Clellan retreating through the forests by narrow by-paths. It was now generally considered he had made good his escape, and that all our toil was in vain; for even had we overtaken him, many thought it a dangerous undertaking to attack his masses with one or two exhausted divisions, as it was certain he would open the fight with his extreme left—troops that had marched but little and were entirely fresh, under the immediate command of Heinzelman and M'Call.

## CHAPTER XI.

Pursuit of M'Clellan continued—Battle of Frazier's Farm, June 30th—Terrific Fighting—Total Rout of the Enemy—Capture of Major-General M'Call—Precarious Position of General Hill—His Genius and Daring—Gossip with a Contraband.

It was now about 5.30 P.M., and the sun was fast sinking behind the woods, when Ambrose Hill's advance column halted; cannonading was plainly heard on our left, in front, from the supposed route of Huger, and couriers brought word that the Federals were disputing his passage across a creek. To our front the roads ascended, with a few fields on either hand, and among the timber on the high ground I saw small spiral columns of light-blue smoke ascending, which assured us that troops of some kind were there. Shortly afterwards a few musket-shots were heard in that direction and some of the cavalry came galloping down towards us with the news that the enemy occupied the open high lands constituting "Frazier's Farm," five miles north-east of Darbytown, on the Newmarket road. The place was represented as good for defence; the woods right and left of it swarmed with skirmishers the ascending grade of the road was swept by cannon while all attempts to flank their left would meet with

broad-sides from the gunboats at Curl's Neck, in the James River, two and a half miles distant.

Nothing daunted, Hill sent word to the rear for our artillery to hurry forward, and immediately commenced his advance. Throwing our regiments to the right and left of the road, in skirmishing order, a lively fire soon ensued, the enemy gradually giving ground before us. This system was pursued by them until we had traversed half a mile, when we came upon their first line of infantry, and fighting commenced in earnest. Sixteen guns now began to belch forth shell, canister, and grape upon us with a stunning roar, and the only battery we had upon the ground could not be brought into position to reply. Yet never wavering or halting, our various regiments pressed forward under an incessant storm of lead. To add to our horrors, the gunboats of the enemy now threw immense shells at us, which tore off the tops of the trees, and so entangled our feet with the *débris* that it was like advancing over felled timber. Such monster shells I never saw. At the same time, long iron bolts, continually tearing through the timber, looked like small lamp-posts.

Still, "onward" was the word, and heroically did our wearied men rush forward to contend with the fresh and untouched divisions of the enemy. Now driven back, fresh troops poured in to take their place, and our men continually found themselves opposed to several "reliefs," ere any other of our regiments came up. But once hand to hand with infantry, and out of the way of cannon, our fellows advanced manfully to the contest, and soon smashed up their first line of

defence. Drawing artillery from our front into the middle of their camps, so as to sweep the rising ground a second line confronted us, and the fighting was even more terrible than before. Volleys upon volleys streamed across our front, and in such quick succession, that it seemed impossible for any human being to live under it. Our firing was quick, but irregular and the men, as usual, proved such adepts with the rifle, that officers were tumbled over every moment.

Footing having been secured on the high ground, the struggle was more equal, and the whole scene was observable at a glance. We were in the timber, on the edge of the field, whereon Frazier's house stands—woods to our left, right, and front, whence the enemy in strong force poured incessant volleys upon any who dared approach their guns, now in full play in the open fields. When our line was re-formed, however, and the wings began to press forward, Featherstone Pryor, and Wilcox pushed the centre vigorously and the first-named, making a rush for the guns seized them, but had to fall back under the fire of a heavy force, and suffered much. Wilcox and Pryor performed prodigies of valour with their exhausted brigades, yet McCall's resources seemed to have no limit, for as soon as one regiment was vanquished another was pushed forward in its place, so that it required great efforts to drive them back. Featherstone and Fields made another dash at their batteries but were so shattered they could not hold them. At last, after resting some time, these two commanders rushed at them again, and secured the guns beyond a

hope of redemption, for our whole line advanced simultaneously with loud yells, and drove the enemy handsomely from the field about 8.30 P.M., after one of the most stoutly contested battles through which we had as yet passed.

Pushing our column forward again, we followed up the enemy's retreat, and did not halt until they were driven more than a mile; but although frequently assailing us in the darkness, it was only for a few moments, for our troops invariably charged upon them, but seldom firing. While our advance was pushing forward, and the enemy's gunboats lit up the heavens with vivid flashes, and shell and iron bolts whizzed and screamed through the air, tearing down the trees like things of pasteboard, a singular incident occurred in the captured camps round Frazier's house. Some Virginia and other troops were leaning on the guns, and conversing about the battle, when a party of horsemen rode up, the chief of whom said, "Who guard these guns?" "We do," was the answer. "That's right, boys," was the pleasant reply; "don't let them fall into the hands of the enemy; heavy reinforcements will arrive shortly. What brigade are you?" inquired the speaker, for it was so dark nothing could be distinguished. "47th Virginia!" was the quick reply. Two of the horsemen turned to flee; but our men detecting the mistake they had made, fired and killed them; the third person, whom they arrested, proved to be no other than Major-General James McCall, U.S.A., one of those who had commanded in the engagement.

Though late in the night, the enemy determined to



make another effort for the recovery of the guns and battle-field, so that while our column moved ahead, unmindful of further danger, a flash of light broke upon their path, revealing the enemy again drawn up in battle array, supported by fresh artillery. Fatigued as we were, from marching over twenty miles, and fighting for several hours, this apparition of the enemy again appearing to our front, with fresh troops, seemed to dishearten all, for it was now 10 P. M., and dark as Erebus. Fighting in the woods is unpleasant at any time, stumbling over fallen timber and stumps; but to find an enemy excellently posted on well-known ground at ten o'clock on a moonless night, with swampy timber on either hand, and a solitary, dusty road to retreat by, and no artillery in support, was sufficient to appal the best of troops; much more so a body of men who had travelled more than twenty miles on a hot and dusty road, without refreshment, and had but just been relieved from a four hours' contest.

Surprised, but not discouraged, our men rapidly formed, under a storm of shot, and taking aim at the stream of fire before them, stubbornly contested the ground inch by inch, and sullenly fell back in admirable order, fighting as they went. Thinking to annihilate our small band of heroes, and recapture all that had been lost, this fresh corps of the enemy now advanced with loud cheers; but our fire was so accurate and well-timed that they soon slackened their pace, and moved forward more cautiously. The position of General Hill was precarious in the extreme. His division was badly shattered by the previous fight, and he was fully

a mile from the battle-field, and obliged to accept another engagement. Holding his ground, he sent for reinforcements; none were within several miles of the spot. Remembering the heroes of Wilcox and other generals who had fought with such fury a few hours before, but were now resting in the rear, he dashed off, and, finding them re-forming, hurriedly explained how matters stood; his appeal was answered with deafening yells. Running forward at the "double quick," these Spartans began to yell more loudly the nearer they approached the scene of conflict; when it was found that the cheering of the Yankees had subsided, and that they were in full retreat again, for, thinking our unearthly noises proceeded from a fresh division advancing to the attack, they were loth to engage them: slinking off in the darkness, they did not fire another shot.

It was fortunate for Hill that the enemy *did* retire; for although he had handsomely whipped them in the first engagement, and bravely held his ground against their fresh divisions in this last encounter, it was not possible he could have successfully withstood them with his few torn and wearied brigades, had they been sufficiently courageous to push their temporary advantage. With his men under arms, therefore, and excellently posted, he remained in position nearly an hour, expecting other demonstrations in his front; but all was still, until the distant tramp and shouts of Magruder's division agreeably broke upon the ear, as they gaily marched upon the scene, and relieved him of all further anxiety. Gathering the remnants of his gallant division, almost decimated by continual hard-fought engagements, Hill

retired to the rear to recruit and re-form, while Magruder's men bivouacked in the enemy's camps, among guns, prisoners, and spoil; their hearts pained by the heart-rending cries of the wounded and dying. The scene upon this, as upon all battle-fields, was truly painful and horrible. The engagement had been obstinately contested, and was a bloody one; for placed as the enemy were upon rising ground, well protected by artillery, every inch had been stoutly contested, and was marked by prostrate bodies of friend and foe.

When the engagement commenced it was not expected that Hill would be left to maintain the contest alone. It was thought that Huger\* would have fallen upon the enemy's rear; but, as usual, that commander was behind time, and Hill, as a consequence, was almost annihilated. It was said that Huger would have arrived in time to assist in the sanguinary contest, but on the

---

\* Major-General Benjamin Huger appears to be near sixty years of age. He is of medium height, thick-set, and stout; full face, ruddy complexion, with grey hair, heavy grey moustaches, grey eye, slow of speech and motion, evidently slow of thought, and sits his horse uneasily. Like most of our generals, his uniform is much worn, and far from imposing, so that few would take him for a major-general. He is brave to a fault, but that does not compensate for the want of a quick, penetrating intellect, and rapidity of movement. When the Norfolk Navy Yard (Virginia) was destroyed and evacuated by the Federals, April 20th, 1861, he was appointed commander of that post, and elaborately fortified it with hundreds of guns found there, bidding defiance to all the vast armaments fitting out at Fortress Monroe. He evacuated the place in April, 1862, according to orders, and served, as we have shown, at "Seven Pines," and during the "week's campaign" before Richmond. The army has spoken bitterly of his "slowness," and he was removed from active operations, and appointed chief of ordnance. He entered the old service at an early age, and when hostilities commenced was brevet colonel, chief of ordnance, being stationed at the extensive arsenal of Pikesville, in Maryland. He has a son, in our army, who has greatly distinguished himself as captain of artillery.

way found the enemy had destroyed the bridge over a creek, and hotly disputed his passage with many guns. An artillery duel ensued, in which we vanquished them. Our cavalry rode over to secure the pieces, but were met by a strong force of infantry and obliged to return. Hearing the firing at Frazier's, the Federal commander retreated, after delaying Huger more than five hours, and joined forces with M'Call against the heroic Hill.

Had not Hill's division been made of steel, rather than flesh and blood, they could not have withstood the many hardships of these trying days, for after fighting desperately at Mechanicsville on Thursday, they marched to Gaine's Mill and fought five hours on Friday; rested part of Saturday; travelled a circuitous route and a terrible road of forty miles on Sunday and Monday, achieving another brilliant victory, unassisted, against great odds! Hill, however, is a general of genius, and had it not been for the scientific handling of his men, few would have slept uninjured on the torn and bloody field on Monday night. All were prostrated with fatigue, and lay on the ground without fires, or covering, or food, too weary to think of anything but rest.

To show the character of the fighting for the past few days, I will merely state that when Featherstone's and other brigades went into action on Friday morning, each mustered an aggregate of from two to three thousand men, but when returns were made late on Monday night, they could not muster more than from five hundred to one thousand fit for duty! Colonels, majors, and captains without number were absent on the rolls—a few killed, the majority wounded, and several sick!

Such mortality could not be long sustained ; yet though we suffered considerably under the many disadvantages of ground, insufficient force, and the absence of artillery, I must again affirm, from a close inspection of the field, that the enemy's loss doubled ours, not including the hundreds of prisoners, thousands of small arms, and many cannon captured. Singular as this may seem, such is the fact, attested by all who were eye-witnesses of this and other engagements, and if there is one cause more than another to which it is attributable, it was undoubtedly owing to the visible protection of a just and protecting God !

On either side of the road, through the thickly growing forests of sedged pines, lamps and lights were flitting through the night, where dead and wounded lay in scores. Most of the fighting had taken place in the timber, and deep marks in the light sandy soil, with bodies of friends and foes scattered in profusion, told where regiment had met regiment in the shade, and rushed together in the deadly shock of battle. Standing near Frazier's house and looking towards Richmond, the land gradually falls, but at this spot more abruptly ; so that the enemy drawn up in battle array on the open farm, screened from sight by timber on all sides, had an unbroken view of our approach, and could tear us with their heavy batteries, no matter how we might manœuvre, while from the river came mammoth shell and iron bolts from their gun-boats, snapping the trees as if they were matches. This selection of ground again shows the genius of M'Clellan ; but it also fully demonstrates to all, that though superior in numbers,

transportation, and matériel, he declined meeting us openly with anything like equal numbers. The whole army had long desired a fair fight in open ground—we had frequently proffered it, though of inferior force—but this long-desired equality we never enjoyed; had we done so, all would have willingly placed their hopes and expectations on a single battle, fully convinced that we could vanquish them in less than an hour. On the contrary, this vaunted army, on which so much care and treasure had been lavished—this General M'Clellan, who was “pushing us to the wall,” and gaining new “victories” every day!—rears breastworks on every hand to protect his army against “a few miserable rebels,” who assail him in his strongholds, destroy his right wing in two days, rout his centre on another, and close up with his rear-guard in the very face of his gunboats! Still they shout with stentorian lungs, “On to Richmond!” “Victory! victory!” “Another great battle! another big smash-up of the rebels!” &c.

Truly this battle was more than an ordinary one, all things considered, and will prove the never-fading honour of Hill, if the impetuous spirit of that gallant soldier does not meet with an untimely fate. He was everywhere among the men, leading and cheering them on in his quiet and determined manner. He saw the overwhelming numbers with which they had to contend, but calmly planning his designs, he was fiery in the execution of them, giving counsel, as if in private life, but mounting his horse and dashing to the front whenever his battalions began to swerve before the masses of the enemy. Discovering their weakest point, he assailed

it with fury, and ordering up the whole line led them into the conquered camps, hat in hand, and never rested a moment until the enemy were driven a mile beyond! Nor was he contented then, for knowing the value of time, he pushed his advance far ahead, and so punished the enemy that they recalled a whole army corps to arrest his ardent progress.

Returned from viewing as much of the field as was possible in the darkness, I observed a light in Frazier's house, from which also there was smoke ascending. Feeling somewhat cold I entered, and, as I expected, found it occupied by many of the wounded. Before the fire sat a middle-aged negro wrapped in a blanket, and shivering.

"What's amiss, uncle?" I inquired, taking a coal and lighting my pipe.

"De Lor bress you, massa!—de chills, de chills, sar!"

Supposing a little liquor would not hurt him, I gave him a drink, ás also to the wounded, as far as it went.

"Were you here, uncle, during the fight?" I asked, taking a stool.

"No, sar!—dis child was in de woods! de best place, *I* tink, when dem ar bullets come a whistlin' and singin' roun' yer head. Was I scart, eh? I tink *I was* scart—it was worse nor half a dozen scartes to dis darkie. Well, yer see, massa, it was dis way. When ole massa hert de Lincumbites was comin' roun' dese diggins, 'Pete,' says he, 'I'se gwine to Richmon', an I wants you ter see to things, an' mine de Lincumbites don't run off with anything; dey won't hurt you,' says

he, 'but if dey only catches *me*, I'm a gone chicken!' Well, massa, one ebenin', while I eat supper, up comes a whole lot of Lincumbites, and says dey, 'Where's de master, nigger?' 'In Richmon',' says I, an' went on eatin'; but a big fellow says to me, 'Hi, nigger, you're wanted out here,' an' I went out. 'How many chickens has yer got?' says one. 'Who's dem turkeys 'long to?' says another. 'If yer don't bring me out some milk I'll bust yer head,' says some one in de crowd. 'Pull dat bed out here,' says some one. 'Tuch him up wid de bayonet,' cried another, and 'kase I couldn't begin to speak to 'em all, somebody kicks me on the shin, and I runs in de house. One of de men wid traps on shoulders next comes, and makes 'em kind o' quiet, but I finds out dey hab taken my supper, and de bed, an' de chars, and didn't leave me my ole pipe!

"Ef dis is de Union folks, tinks I, dey wont suit dis darkie, sure!' so after dey stole all de chickens, and de turkeys, and cabbage and taters, I tought it was about time for dis chile to leave. So I packs up two or tree things in a yaller handkercher, and puts out. 'Halt, dar!' says a big feller wid a gun. 'Where's you gwine, darkie?' 'I'm gwine to Richmon',' says I, 'to massa, to get somethin' to eat.' 'Oh, yer tick-head nigger,' says he, 'doesn't yer know we'se de Grate Liberation army ob de Norf, an' come to set all de niggers free?' 'I'se a free coloured pussun, any how,' says I, 'an' kin go anywhere I'se a mind,' says I; an' was goin' pass him, when he hits me wid de gun, and two soldyers seizes me by the scruff ob de neck, an' hauls me up before de kernel.



“ ‘Where did you find this coloured feller?’ says he, smoking a cigar, big like, and frowning out his legs. ‘Where did you cotch de conterbran?’” says another, drinkin’ whisky. ‘I guess dese unfortunate peoples don’t know de blessin’ of de Union, an’ de ole flag!’ ‘I’s a free man, sar,’ says I. ‘Hole yer tongue,’ says he, getting kind o’ red; ‘if dese people don’t know de blessin’ ob liberty, an’ don’t ‘preciate us, dey must be taught, *dat’s* all! Is dar no diggin’ to be done, captin?’ says he to another one lyin’ on a bed. ‘I guess so,’ says he, ‘dare’s nofing like it.’ ‘Take him off to de guard-house, sargent,’ says he, and kase I said, ‘I’s free,’ de sargent begins an’ kicks de clof out ob my pants. An’ dare dey hab me, massa, more nor a week, diggin’ ebery day, an’ feedin’ me an’ lots of other darkies on black beans, an’ pork massa’s hogs won’t eat. But when I hear de firin’ goin’ on—‘now’s de time for dis chile,’ says I, and I gets out ob de way rite smart for an ole darky. Fust I gets to de right, but de bullets fly so mighty thick, I runs off somewhar else; den one ob dem big screechin’ things comes along, an’ I begins to say my prayers mighty fast; den while I lay b’hind a tree, our folks comes up, makin’ big noise, an’ I lays bery close to de groun’; but which way I go, it seems as if *some* darned bullet was chuckin’ in to me, so I gets mighty scart, an’ runs clar into de swamp, and dar I stays until jist now, when I crawls home agin’ shiverin’ in ebery joint! Nobody talk to me, massa, of de Norf. I knows how it is—dey only wants to work de life out ob de coloured folks, an den dey gives ’em deir ‘free papers,’ to let ’em starve when dare’s no more bress-

works to dig. Dey can't fool dis chile—*he* knows more nor he wishes to know about deir Grate Norfern Libratin' Union army; but ef all de darkies are done to as dey did to dis pussun, de darkies better stay wid ole massa, an' lib as he like, and have doctors to look at 'em, and hab dimes to spen'. Lor' hab mercy on us, massa, but dare's many dead folks lying aroun' ole massa's place. De Yanks used to talk big ebbery day fore yer come along, and dey was going to do debble an' all, but I guess dey knows as much about ole Virginny *now* as I did *before* dey trabbled from the Norf to give de Suvern boys a shake! Big fools, ain't dey, to tink dey're good as us, whose born on de ole place, and grow up wid white folks' children? Why, dey ain't half as good as some darkies, if dey *is* white folks and talks big!"

## CHAPTER XII.

The Pursuit of McClellan continued—Where is Old Jackson?—The Federal Troops kept in ignorance of their Retreat—Use of Federal Cavalry—The 7th New York—Battle of Malvern Hill—Desperate Engagement, July 1st—Reckless Sacrifice of Life by Magruder—Gallantry of Colonel Norman—The Enemy, fully routed and demoralized, seek Protection under their Gunboats.

WEARIED beyond all expression by the continual marching and fighting of the past week, I procured a bundle of hay and a few handfuls of corn for my jaded horse, and throwing myself down on a heap of straw beneath the pines, sought some little rest. The continual movement of troops, however, through the night, passing and repassing by a single road within a few feet of me, disturbed my slumber, and half asleep or awake, I heard all kinds of voices and noises around me. Huger's division had at last arrived somewhere in the neighbourhood. Jackson's, Longstreet's, and other divisions were distributed in every direction through the neighbouring woods, and it was difficult to ascertain in what order; for, having left my horse for five minutes to drink a cup of "rye coffee," kindly proffered by an aide, I was nearly an hour in finding again the much coveted bed of straw. First, I found myself among Magruder's men: next, I turned down

the road a few yards, and found myself in Whiting's division, and, strange as it may seem, I had hunted among nearly all the divisions of the army ere I found my voracious horse, which had eaten up all my bedding.

Unstrapping a blanket, I threw myself among leaves and branches upon the sand, and did everything I could imagine to court sleep; but just as my eyes closed, some one would shove me and inquire, "Where is Lee's head-quarters?" "Is this Longstreet's division?" and so on. At other times, I suddenly awoke, and found some one mounting my horse in mistake for his own; then, again, loud reports of musketry in front awoke all, and brought us suddenly to our feet. At length, in despair, I rode down to a brook, watered my horse, washed my face, and stood, with bridle in hand, dozing against a tree until morning broke.

More asleep than awake, duties called me in various directions, and the universal bustle indicated that a general engagement was anticipated. Infantry were busy cleaning arms, field officers stood aloof in groups, conversing; generals and staffs moved to and fro, while couriers were everywhere inquiring for Jackson, Longstreet, Hill, Magruder, and all the generals in the army. None could tell where these officers were. A few moments before, such an one was seen passing up the road, another down, but where they were at any particular time the best informed could not pretend to tell. In and out of the woods, they were moving incessantly. "Where is old Jackson, I wonder?" petulantly inquired a dusty courier, with his horse in

a foam; "I wish to heaven these generals would have some fixed spot where they might be found; but the devil of it is, old Jackson is *always* moving about. I think he even walks in his sleep, or never sleeps at all, for here have I been hunting him for the past hour." Everybody in the group laughed, except one seedy, oldish-looking officer, intently listening to the picket-firing in front, whom nobody thought to be more than some old major or other. "Here is Jackson, young man," said the officer, turning quietly, without a muscle moving. "Return to your post, sir," said he; "this paper requires no answer." And he put it in his pocket, and trotted off as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. "Who would have thought *that* was he?" we all exclaimed. "Oh, 'tis just like him," said one; "I have known him to dismount and help artillery out of the mud for half an hour at a time, and ride off again without being discovered. He is always poking about in out-of-the-way places: not unfrequently he rides unattended to distant outposts at night, and converses with the pickets about the movements of the enemy, and without more ceremony than you just now saw exhibited. It is his continual industry and sleeplessness that have routed Banks, Shields, and others in the Valley. He is continually moving himself, and expects all under him to be animated by the same solicitude and watchfulness."

It was now past 7 A.M., and our advanced guard had been on the move some time, but without discovering the slightest clue to the whereabouts of McClellan and his army. It was conjectured that he had been travelling

all night through the swamp to reach his gunboats at the river, but in which direction none could imagine. Our troops occupied all the main avenues of his retreat, yet no signs were visible of the route pursued by him. There was but one road left open to him, and that was merely a waggon-track through dense timber, where it was considered improbable any of his forces would pass, although it was far nearer to the river. With troops on three sides of him, it was thought he might make a desperate stand, once again, and endeavour to turn the fortune of war. He was *somewhere* in this irregular, marshy, swampy, and densely-timbered country, but at what precise point none could imagine.

We had captured many laggards of his army, but they were unable to give the slightest intimation of his route. All they knew was, that his rear was heavily guarded by artillery and cavalry, the latter having orders to shoot any who broke ranks and lagged behind. The teams had gone far ahead, escorted by horsemen, and many drivers had been shot on the spot for unruly behaviour. Thousands of the army were ragged, torn, and wounded; but were encouraged by M'Clellan, who said "he had the rebels, now, just where he wanted them, and should be able to take Richmond much more speedily than before." *They* did not believe him, nor did any of the army; the immense crowds of dead and wounded, and their hasty retreat, told too plainly that they were badly whipped, and had better make for their gunboats as speedily as possible. A few hours before the battle of Frazier's Farm, M'Clellan, they informed us, had addressed the troops there with visible

emotion; he besought his men to cheer up, and not be discouraged—begged all, in the name of God, not to disgrace themselves again, but fight manfully for the Union and the old flag! He was confident of whipping us—he had all things “cut and dried” for our destruction at Frazier’s, and was going to attack us with fresh troops, and annihilate our first division before others came up. His position was much higher than ours, the artillery excellently placed, &c.; and he passionately begged the men to stand to their arms, for he intended to destroy us, and push on to Richmond. These prisoners told a doleful tale of affairs since the fight opened at the Branch turnpike on Thursday afternoon. The rank and file knew nothing of Jackson’s approach in the direction of Hanover Court-house; but the officers knew: and when asked what the immense destruction of stores meant along the line, they answered ambiguously, spoke of a probable “change of base,” “clearing of the rear,” and of a speedy “march to Richmond.” When Porter’s right wing was driven out of Mechanicsville, Ellyson’s Mills, and Beaver Dam Creek, M’Clellan laughed, and said he was only “drawing the rebels on to destruction” at Gaine’s Mill; and when the whole of the right and part of the centre were driven thence, he said that now the rebels were fairly caught in his toils, he had gotten us all on the north bank, and was going to hurl his strength at our right, feeble as it was, and capture Richmond in one day, before we had time to re-cross and oppose him.

This was all believed by the multitude, who relied

implicitly on his word, until the heavy waggon-trains of Porter and other generals began moving towards the James River on Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday, and the torch was applied to their stores. When, added to this, our advance moved down the railroad, and routed their chosen rear-guard at "Savage Station" and other places—then the men began to think M'Clellan was fooling them, and that "on to Richmond" was a hoax! The consequences of this conviction spreading among the troops may be imagined. There were heavy forces stationed at Frazier's to retard our advance, and M'Call, Heinzleman, and others, thinking them sufficient, M'Clellan and the rest pushed forward into the swamp; but when these generals were defeated, M'Clellan, fearful for the safety of the remainder, detached a whole corps at 9 P.M. to arrest our farther advance. Their troops, these prisoners informed us, had been on the move night and day since Thursday: the entire army was demoralized, and only kept under subjection by large forces of antillery and cavalry hovering in the rear. The cavalry were of no use, they said, only to intimidate the infantry, and were always stationed in the rear during a fight, to cut and shoot any who lagged behind or broke into disorder, allowing no one to pass from the field unless wounded!

Here was a sad picture! Cavalry employed to force their infantry to the front! That this is true, is verified by scores, and I myself have seen their cavalry cut and thrust among them when routed, disordered, and unwilling to advance, particularly when our picket-posts were skirmishing in the vicinity of Munson's



Hill and Arlington, during the month of September, 1861.

Foot-sore, jaded, ragged, and oftentimes wounded, long files of prisoners passed us during the morning, feeling heartily glad to have fallen into our hands. Many sat by the roadside, chatting intelligently of the course of events; one and all agreed that it was now impossible to surround M'Clellan, for he was near his transports, and had a large flotilla of gunboats, with ports open, ready to bombard our army, should we approach too near. Had we but possessed gunboats on the river, we might have achieved wonders; but destitute of this arm, we could only follow as far as practicable, and do our best. From an officer among the prisoners, I heard an incident related, which may be considered worthy of remembrance.

In April, 1861, when General Scott made a great fuss in the papers about the peril of Washington, among the first to volunteer their services was the celebrated "7th regiment" of New York city—a corps that was the pet of the whole country, being, perhaps, better drilled than any other volunteer regiment in the world. They mustered about 800 bayonets; had four or five fancy suits; the best of arms; the best blood of New York was enrolled in their rank and file—in short, the men of this regiment were dandies and "exclusives." They had a pretty drum corps of forty drummers, and a splendid mixed band of seventy silver and reed instruments; and when they thought proper to parade, the whole city was on tiptoe with curiosity. Upon their arrival at Washington, and

during the entire journey, artists of illustrated sheets were ever on the spot, ready with pencil in hand, to sketch the most insignificant event. When at the capital, these carpet knights refused to cross the Potomac for active service, and soon returned to New York, with flying banners, as if returning from conquest. Then came the time when Banks' army, routed by Jackson at Front Royal, rushed in disordered masses to Washington, and again the cry was raised of "the capitol in danger," and the "gallant 7th" volunteered to go to its defence a second time. This time they found a master in M'Clellan, who unceremoniously marched them to his lines in front of Richmond! In a few days the "week's campaign" opened, and the first fight in which they participated was at Frazier's Farm, where they left hundreds of bodies and knapsacks behind them! I had seen scores of our men with knapsacks, on which was painted "15th Massachusetts," "12th New York," "20th Rhode Island," "7th New York," &c., but it never occurred to me that this was the "7th New York" whose fine appearance in Broadway and in Washington, on festal occasions, was the everlasting theme of reporters, and the envy of every other military organization in the States. In looking at the number of dead bodies scattered far and wide, I could not but meditate on the havoc which our dusty, ragged, and powder-stained Southerners had made in this, the finest regiment of the North!

From the uncertainty that prevailed regarding M'Clellan's force, position, and intentions, it was dangerous to push on the advance rapidly. Magruder

therefore moved his division cautiously through the woods and along the wretched lanes, expecting to find the Federals drawn up in every open space we came across. A strong body of skirmishers, supported by a few pieces of artillery, followed the advance of the cavalry, who diligently reconnoitred every wood ere the main body followed. At a tortuous gait regiment after regiment filed past Frazier's towards the south-east in the direction of the river, halting incessantly, while artillery shelled the woods; feeling about in a wide expanse of timbered swamp for the ubiquitous M'Clellan and his "Grand Army of the Potomac." He could be found nowhere, and some began to imagine that he had effected an inglorious flight to James River, there to embark for parts unknown. The 1st North Carolina cavalry—or rather what remained of that gallant regiment—was ordered to the front, and had lively recollections of the enemy's uncivil greeting at Frazier's Farm early on Sunday morning. They galloped forward gaily, however, at the bugle-call, and dashed off down the lane on a scout, north of where M'Clellan was supposed to be. All listened attentively for distant firing, and about 1 P.M. shots were rapidly exchanged to the south-east, towards the river, in the neighbourhood of Carter's farm, about two miles distant. After a tedious advance of more than four hours, beating about through the timber, in this rugged, thickly-timbered swamp, the enemy were at last found, admirably posted in strong force!

The advance was now taken up with spirit: the men seemed delighted. It was thought that Holmes' divi-

sion might still succeed in flanking the enemy near the river, and get in their rear. Jackson was on their left flank, and Longstreet close up on the right, Magruder being the centre; all our troops, consequently, were within a radius of ten miles, the wings gradually converging to a point. M'Clellan's only outlet was the river, where he had the advantage of his gun-boats and transports. But it must be remembered that the ground towards the river was undulating, and rising far above the ordinary level in that vicinity, was admirable for defence. In fact, it was discovered that the enemy were strongly posted on Malvern Hill (near the river); and all approach for more than a mile being through open undulating fields on Carter's farm, they had an unbroken view of our advance from the timber, and could sweep us at leisure with more than fifty pieces of different calibres! Woods to our rear, left, and right—open fields to the front gradually rising for half a mile; a plateau of six hundred yards still beyond; while farther still, commanding all approach, rose abruptly Malvern Hill, on and around which were massed their heaviest artillery.\*

The reader may imagine our own situation compared with this admirably selected position, and the desperate work entrusted to us. It was M'Clellan's last stand, and there was every indication that he meant to defend it to the last extremity, as a means of protecting his further retreat to the river. The incessant cannonade

---

\* It has been said by Northern authorities that M'Clellan had more than 100 pieces in position at this place, many of them being 24-pound rifles.

from Curl's Neck, and the untiring energy of the gun-boats, rendered it impossible for Holmes to flank him, or get in the rear ; while the absence of roads to our front, right, and left, prevented a vigorous advance in those quarters. Forming in the woods, however, our infantry advanced, and soon disposed of the Federal outposts, for they ran at the first fire, and many surrendered. While feeling our way in the timber, to the right and left of M'Clellan's formidable position, we were opposed by heavy bodies of infantry ; but from their feeble style of fighting it was evident they were ordered to fall back gradually so as to entice us into the open fields, where their artillery could play with effect. Our generals in front seeing the intention, halted their forces in the edge of the timber, and consulting with Magruder, explained the true posture of affairs. It was evident the enemy would not trust their infantry ; and for us to succeed with them it was absolutely necessary for a heavy force of artillery to move up and cover any further advance.

It was now past 4 P.M., and if anything was to be attempted the work must be quick and desperate ! The artillery could *not* get up in time : hence, trusting to the impetuous valour of his troops, Magruder insisted upon charging the position, no matter what might be the cost ! Cobb and others endeavoured to explain, and invited Magruder to visit the scene ! There was a run of more than six hundred yards up a rising ground, an unbroken flat beyond of several hundred yards, 100 pieces of cannon behind breastworks, and heavy masses of infantry in support ? Arguments were un-

availing—Magruder was general, and ordered it—he was the only one responsible! Let the men advance and charge! Was he tipsy? I know not, though common report avows he was; and passing, I wondered whether he had returned to his old habits at such an important moment, to frustrate all our designs by passion and intoxication! Hundreds are willing to swear that he was unfit to command on that day, and complaints were afterwards made to the War Department regarding him. But to the battle.

Cobb was unwilling to slaughter his brigade, and told Magruder so, but added, “If you command me to go, I will charge until my last man falls!” He *was* commanded. Gathering his devoted Georgians and Louisianians around him, he explained the situation, and moved forward, with the promise of ample reinforcements. On the edge of the timber Cobb was exhausted, and gave over the command to Colonel Norman, of the 2nd Louisiana. Creeping through the woods as far as practicable, Norman deployed the brigade in open ground, and rushed up to the plateau at the “double quick.” Directly this gallant command arrived in full view, a flash of light gleamed from the woods and hill in front, belching forth shell, canister, and grape in their midst; and the aim being accurate, scores of our men fell at every discharge. Heroically riding to the front, the intrepid Norman coolly gave commands in a clear, calm voice; his devoted companions closing up their shattered ranks, advanced with yells of defiance: and under the storm of fifty pieces, and thousands of rifles to their rear, young

Norman advanced with colours flying to within hundred yards of the guns, and there halted. With clothes all tattered, hatless, sabre in hand, this heroic Louisianian turned in his saddle, ordered his men to lie down, and anxiously looked back for the promised reinforcements. Woods to his rear, dark and silent, gave no sign of their approach; yet singly and alone, before heaven and earth, this man of steel held the ground and though his command was momentarily wasting like snow, encouraged his veterans, re-formed the line, and yelled defiance at the masses of infantry who hovered near, but dared not approach. For more than twenty minutes Norman held his ground; but finding half the command lying dead, he gathered all that remained in compact order and filed obliquely to the woods. But here he breathed his last. The Federals had sent through the timber a brigade to cut off his retreat. Our men, exasperated by their losses, gave a loud shout, and assailed them with such fury, that they broke and fled after a fight of ten minutes, leaving the remnant of this command to retire to the rear, to mourn the loss of hundreds, who, like Norman, fell sabre in hand, with their face to the enemy.

Wright's brigade was also sent forward, but met with a similar fate. It seemed as if Magruder was intent on killing his men by detachments, for there seemed to be no settled plan of action; and instead of rapidly pushing forward reinforcements to succour those in front, the unfortunate commanders were compelled to stand before the enemy's pieces, without support, until decimated, and then retire as formerly. Several brigades at

different times were hurled against this position, but with like success. Some advanced farther than others, and our dead were numerous under the cannon's mouth; but after running for a mile under a murderous fire, they lacked the strength to climb breastworks in the face of masses of the enemy. The Mississippi and some other brigades actually drove the enemy from the guns; but they were met by overwhelming numbers, who had rested all day in the shade, and had not been subjected to many hours' hard marching and fighting. To add to the horrors of the scene, and the immense slaughter in front of this tremendous battery, the gun-boats increased the rapidity of their broadsides, and the immense missiles coursed through the air with great noise, tearing off the tree-tops and bursting with loud explosions.

It was now dark, and little could be done. We were gradually approaching M'Clellan's wings, and he considered it expedient to retire his infantry, leaving the work to be done by his artillery. By this time several of our pieces had been moved up to the front, and two companies of the Washington Artillery did great service in silencing some of the enemy's guns. Why those companies were not ordered up before, to cover our attack, may be explained perhaps by some future historian. All I know is, that curses were on every lip against Magruder, and from men whose position warrants me in thinking they had solid reasons for their angry vituperation. All I dare say now is, that I never heard a mortal man so despised and execrated among all classes of military men; and when the amount of



carnage is considered, of which he was the occasion, it would seem that their violent language was excusable, for under those guns lay dead, that night, hundreds of the best and worthiest men the South ever produced—a bleeding, mangled monument, illustrative of the ignorance, stupidity, or drunkenness of one petted and flattered for talents he seldom exhibits.

As soon as darkness permitted, the enemy silently retreated from their position, and it was well they did so, for troops were gradually encircling, and would have captured them, ere the rising of the sun. Still eager for fight, our advance crept closer and closer, and during the night made a rush upon their infantry, and took the place, together with many prisoners, small arms, and several guns; but it must be admitted that the great mass of their forces had silently withdrawn into the swamp, none knew whither. Such a spectacle as the scene presented on this memorable hill none who saw it will ever forget. The dead, wounded, and dying of all regiments were scattered about in mangled heaps, for more than a mile, while around and underneath the guns, majors, captains, colonels, and dozens of our men were seen just as they had fallen, sabre in hand, and with face to the enemy! Many were headless—the swords of some broken; and leaning over one of the captured pieces was a young officer, who, I thought, was simply resting; on closer inspection I found him to be lifeless; he had died as he had stood, hatless, revolver and sword in hand! Truly our loss at this place was horrible; the best brigades in the service—regiments which had acquired historic fame—were cut up unneces-

sarily in the attempt to carry the place, unassisted by artillery.

Inside the battery sights as ghastly met the view. The few cannon which had been brought up towards the close of the day, did great execution among the masses drawn up here, and scores seemed to have fallen from the accuracy of our fire. A wounded Federal officer, whom I assisted, told me that all that was needed in our first assault was fresh troops to follow up the movement, for on more than one occasion the Federals rushed out from the batteries, and could not be induced to return. In several instances, indeed, our troops got in between the guns, and had cleared them, but the want of timely reinforcements defeated our plans. Several prisoners said it was downright madness in our generals to attack in the manner they did, and their gunners seemed to pity the immense sacrifice to which we had been exposed. Could not Lee have assumed command at this point when things were evidently going wrong? Undoubtedly; "but then," say some, "it would not have been 'in form' to take command from a major-general, and pretend to instruct him on the field." True, a general is supposed to know his business; but no sane person would argue that thousands of men must be sacrificed in his experiments if he has yet to learn the art of war. It is enough that men volunteer for the cause, and are willing to die, in the legitimate prosecution of warfare. I know of no rule that requires a commander-in-chief to remain quiet, merely from "professional delicacy," when subordinates are acting against the best counsel of those

in front,—contrary to the knowledge of men who have thoroughly reconnoitred the ground, and in defiance of all considerations arising from the strength of the enemy's position. If such is the result of that "professional delicacy" one commander bears another, the sooner it is abolished the better for thousands of brave patriots, who blindly believe that the talents of their commanders are commensurate with the position they hold.\*

It is true, Malvern Hill was ours, but at a cost which the capture of that formidable position could never repay; for I am certain thousands were unnecessarily slaughtered, and that had the advance been commanded by Longstreet, Jackson, or the Hills, not one half the carnage would have ensued. Although Magruder did eventually enter the work, it added

---

\* It is much more pleasant to praise than to blame; but truth and public opinion demand that I should speak of things as they really were; and if my comments on Magruder's actions seem severe, I but simply reiterate, in a mild form, the sweeping denunciation his conduct met with at the hands of thousands, who were present, and in his command on that and other occasions. Subsequent to the "week's campaign," he was appointed chief in command of the Trans-Mississippi Department, comprising Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana (west of the river) and Texas; and was on his way thither, when an official telegram ordered him back to Richmond to answer a charge of drunkenness, &c. at Malvern Hill. The court-martial is said to have fully acquitted him, but his command was then and there circumscribed to that part of the Trans-Mississippi Department comprised in the State of Texas alone. Magruder soon began to show signs of activity and capacity in this distant station, and after a spirited action at Galveston, seized the place, took several hundred prisoners, and two or three vessels of war, including the *Harriet Lane*. Several Federal vessels escaped from the harbour while flying flags of truce! The place was immediately fortified, and has not been re-captured. With the people of the South-West, Magruder is a great favourite.

nothing to his merit, but, if anything, detracted from the little reputation he had gained at Bethel, at the expense of D. H. Hill. With such a magnificent command as was entrusted to him, Magruder might have rendered his name for ever illustrious; but from the moment that he commenced his advance down the railroad on Sunday afternoon until this miserable sacrifice of life at Malvern Hill, he did nought but fume, and fret, and quarrel with the best officers under him; and his commands were sometimes so contradictory that those of his own staff could not comprehend or deliver them intelligibly to brigadiers or colonels. In a word, he acted as a man usually does when he is out of his proper sphere. As an engineer and artillerist there are few to surpass him, but entrust "planning" to him, and he fails. He can "execute" with vigour what Lee or Jackson are well fitted to plan, nothing more.

When it was discovered that M'Clellan had again retired, and was in full retreat, Lee instantly recommenced the advance, although it rained in floods. But the Federals seemed to have vanished once more in this densely-timbered swamp. The outposts saw no signs of them, and most of the day was lost before it was ascertained whither M'Clellan had fled. Towards night it was discovered he had conducted his whole force by a narrow road through a thick swampy wood, several miles in extent, and was safe under his gun-boats at Harrison's landing, having occupied the neighbouring hills and strongly fortified them! Our advance to his position could be made but by one road—that which he had traversed—and, as it was very narrow, and swept by numerous

artillery, pursuit was impossible. Some of our cavalry, who penetrated several miles through the swamp, captured a few prisoners in the bushes, and from them we learned the story of their last march and escape.

Malvern Hill was ordered to be defended to the last extremity, as that position alone ensured the safety of the Federal army. Several parts of the hill were vacated, when our brigades impetuously advanced to the assault, but observing that single brigades were unsupported, the enemy returned. All were in breathless suspense; for had we captured it early in the day, M'Clellan's army were in full view retiring rapidly towards the river, and could be shelled at discretion. When night fell, their retreat was taken up in earnest—our men were on three sides of them—and the greatest quietness prevailed, for it was thought the discharge of a single musket would have revealed their passage through the dense timber. Along this narrow road, then, the whole army had rapidly retired, and as the dead and wounded were an incumbrance at such a juncture, thousands were left behind to the mercy of the rebels! Waggon, stores, hospitals, guns—dismounted and not—were unheeded, and left in great number; while hundreds of foot-sore, lame, and exhausted men were picked up in every field. I myself saw not less than several squads of twenty or more coming to meet us, when our advance cavalry approached; while every house, barn, bush, or sheltering wood, contained hundreds of sick and wounded. The enemy's march through this narrow lane is represented to have been rapid—regiments mixed with regiments, men of all corps hurried along in great anxiety,

ragged, weary, dirty, armed and unarmed, and perfectly dispirited. They were thoroughly beaten, and had the retreat lasted but a day or two longer, or had we overtaken and engaged them in any open space, they could not have stood an hour; in fact, they were so completely demoralized that all their anxiety was to reach the river, towards which they rushed in tremendous haste. Nor were hundreds satisfied when reaching the river; for, forgetful of discipline and all things else in a desire to remove far from danger, they seized the boats and hurried to the opposite banks, or to the various islands of the James. These latter were subsequently taken off by their own boats, but Confederate detachments on the south bank captured the former, who were immediately sent to the tobacco-warehouses of Richmond.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Recapitulation and "Official" Review of the "Week's Campaign"—Loss and Gain—Scenes and Incidents of the Struggle—The Federal Army massed round the Heights of Berkley—Night Attack by the Artillery and Fearful Destruction—Subsequent Demonstration by M'Clellan—General Pope and other Northern Commanders rise in favour.

WHEN it became known beyond all doubt that M'Clellan was safe, and strongly posted on the river bluffs at Berkley, the pursuit was discontinued, his position being one that was peculiarly well adapted for defence. This had been proved during the Revolution of 1776, and in the year 1812, when British forces had occupied the same spot. Lee therefore did not seem at all inclined to push matters to an extremity, but disposed his division to prevent any advance of the enemy, and to precipitate an engagement should they endeavour to leave the position they had gained and attempt to retreat.

While our army under these circumstances was resting, to recover from its recent fatigue, business called us from camp to Richmond. I did not observe signs of any jubilation over our series of victories; business progressed as quietly as ever; there were neither speeches, dinners, balls, nor any demonstration remarkably indicative of joy or vanity. Everything was

quiet; people spoke of our successes as matters which had never been once doubted. "Southern men were sure to come off victorious if engaged with anything like equal numbers," &c.; but all regretted the escape of M'Clellan. It was the darling desire of old gentlemen that "Mac" should be made prisoner and included in the long list of generals, hundreds of regimental officers, and over 7,000 privates then in custody. The churches, however, were well attended: prayers were offered up in thanksgiving for deliverance from danger, and to avert the further effusion of human blood; and to judge from the immense congregations that assembled for divine worship, it seemed that all were strongly impressed with sentiments of sincere thankfulness to God.

The various departments were as busy as usual, and particularly the War Office. It seemed certain, from the general activity, that Lee did not contemplate much idleness while summer lasted, and that active operations would recommence immediately the army had sufficiently recuperated. Where the next blow would be struck, none could imagine. Yet officers who knew, or thought they knew, the secret, ominously winked and nodded, stroked their nose, and appeared very wise, or desired to be considered so. Hospitals were scattered over the entire town, and crowds of wounded men with bandaged heads or arms strolled about the streets in their patched and mud-coloured clothes, while dandy clerks in departments donned fancy military gold-laced caps, elevated their eyebrows, and gazed about them with an air of infinite superiority, or, more properly



speaking, of profound stupidity! Trains bound for the South conveyed hundreds of discharged and furloughed men, who, limping, bandaged, armless, or legless, seemed delighted at the idea of seeing their homes once again; while fond old couples looked with pride upon sons by their side on crutches, and never failed to answer inquiries, by telling in which battle they were wounded, and remarking upon their gallantry. In fact, every parent thought his son *the* hero of the campaign, and to hear patriotic old ladies talking of the war, one would be led to believe they would make excellent soldiers themselves.

As I have remarked on other occasions, there were no bounds to the volubility and enthusiasm of the ladies, young and old, and the appearance of a wounded man entering the cars was sure to bring many to their feet with a kind hand to assist them to the best seats. None were allowed to dress or pour water on wounds but the ladies, and they would hang around a poor ragged boy with as much tenderness, and show him more kindness than if he were Emperor of All the Russias. The anxiety, care, kindness, and unceasing industry evinced by all classes of women for our wounded, in and out of hospital, far surpasses any conception that may be formed from words. Had our men been the sons, husbands, or brothers of those who interested themselves in their fate, they could not have received more kindness than they did from women of every rank and condition. Blankets were torn from their beds, flannel skirts converted into under-clothing, the finest of linen torn up for lint, wedding and other silk dresses cut up for flags, band-

ages, and rosettes; everything, in fine, betrayed the unconquerable spirit that animated them, and when all else was given away, they had kind words or tears of sympathy by the bedsides of the suffering or dying!

It is almost superfluous to say that the anxiety of parents and others arriving in the city from distant parts was heart-rending. Some had been seeking sons or relatives for a week—hunting everywhere for the lost ones: some were found, but many, alas! slept upon the battle-fields; and to witness the affliction and tears of many as they searched hospital after hospital, was enough to move the heart of the most obdurate. Ministers and doctors were ever on the move, night and day; waggon-loads of captured ice were daily deposited at the hospitals: while the large amount of medicines, surgical instruments, bandages, stretchers and ambulances, left behind by the Federals, greatly assisted the wants and comforts of our men. Lights burning all night in any dwelling was a sure sign of some wounded inmate; crape streamers at doors, and a continual movement of hearses, told that scores were daily numbered with the dead. Long lines of open pits in suburban cemeteries were rapidly filling up, and the number of new-made graves spoke of hundreds of brave spirits slumbering beneath modest head-boards.

Strolling about one evening after returning from a game at billiards, I heard a noise of laughter above me, proceeding from one of the rooms in the "Spottswood," and recognizing the voice of Dobbs, walked up and entered without knocking. There were at least ten persons crowded in one of the small rooms, all with

their coats off, save the old major; they were smoking, playing cards, and making much noise over some half-dozen bottles of Cognac. After much nodding and hand-shaking, I entered a quiet circle at the window, and, pipes being the order of the evening, my "sham" was soon glowing with a charge of "Billy Bowlegs' double extra," and the conversation became professional. Each had pet ideas regarding past events, and criticism ran wild and incoherent. One did not like *this* style of doing things, and another *that*; *this* general was unmercifully be-rated, and *that* one extravagantly praised, so that, attentive as I was, it was utterly impossible to arrive at any accurate sense of the prevailing opinion.

"I tell you," said Dobbs, after imbibing a large draught of brandy, and priming himself for a speech, "I tell you, gentlemen, that Lee's plan surpasses anything I have ever read in military history. Just look at the entire arrangement. When our main army fell back from Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock, and Rapidan, and went to Yorktown to meet McClellan, Fredericksburg was threatened by a large division under McDowell: Ewell was deputed to watch him, and did it well; but in the Valley there were not less than three army corps coming up to form a grand army to advance on Richmond from the west. Jackson was at Winchester with a small force, and was ordered to attack Shields (Banks being sick), so as to create a diversion in our favour. Although obliged to retire after the battle of Kearnstown, Jackson called on Ewell, and, receiving reinforcements from him, suddenly pounced down on Banks at Front Royal, and chased

him to Washington, capturing immense quantities of baggage and thousands of prisoners. He retired again, and, recruited, rushed down the Valley, and instead of allowing Shields and Fremont to join M'Dowell, beat them both in detail, and obliged M'Dowell to fall back. Retreating again, Jackson begged for reinforcements, and they were sent. But while the Federal commanders were planning to entrap him, should he again go to the Valley, he made pretences of doing so, and by forced marches swooped down upon M'Clellan's right and rear, before the Federals in the Valley could recover from their astonishment and chagrin."

"True," said another, "it was a master-stroke of Lee; and when Branch at Brooke Bridge and Hill at Meadow Bridge assailed in front, the game was up with their right wing, for these, uncovering Mechanicsville Bridge, allowed Longstreet and D. H. Hill to cross likewise."

"The attack of Ambrose Hill was a spirited affair, and beautifully conducted.\* Jackson was hovering in their rear,† and Branch fighting his way in our centre,

---

\* Ambrose P. Hill is a Virginian; graduated at West Point, and was brevet second lieutenant, 1st U. S. Artillery, 1st July, 1847, that being the time of his entering the service. We find him placed first lieutenant, 1st Artillery, 4th September, 1851. He was among the first officers who left the old army, and offered their services to the South, and was always looked upon as a "promising" officer; the part he has played in the present struggle for independence stamps him as a young man of real genius. He greatly distinguished himself at "Manassas," 21st July, "Mechanicsville," "Gaine's Mill," &c. He is now a major-general.

† JACKSON DID IT.—"It is very easy, now that the affair is over, to perceive the cause of M'Clellan's recent reverse. At the last moment, when least expected, and equally to the surprise, we have no doubt, of

so that before such a force they were *obliged* to fall back. Their defence of Mechanicsville, Ellyson's Mills, and Beaver Dam Creek deserves credit, for had our men been less impetuous, we should have found every avenue to Gainé's Mill much more strongly fortified than we did. Think you the Federals dreamed of such a daring attack?"

"It would seem they had notions of moving, or their stores would not have been destroyed a week beforehand. Troops from all the States did well, but I think Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama lost more than any others up to Sunday night. The Texans at Gainé's Mill immortalized themselves; rushing across that wide expanse of open ground and capturing the guns surprised all.\* General Lee is loud in praise of their

---

President Lincoln, Secretary Stanton, and General M'Clellan himself, Stonewall Jackson rushed from the Valley of the Shenandoah, attacked our right wing, forced it back and got in rear of our whole army, without weakening the rebel force massed in front of it, by a single man. No general on earth could make head against such a *coup de guerre*. If M'Clellan had stood his ground and fought in such a position, nothing in the world could have prevented the utter annihilation of the army of the Potomac."—*N. Y. Paper*.

\* A Texan soldier writes of this charge:—"A splendid battery of thirteen guns, manned by regulars, was just beyond, belching forth destruction, and it seemed almost like certain death to venture upon the brow of the hill; but these were Texans. The most extraordinary fact about it was, that this terrible battle was being fought without any directions from officers on our side. We had lost all our field officers before we got to the first battery—the lieutenant-colonel mortally wounded, since dead; the major badly wounded, since dead; and many of the line officers killed or wounded. When I got to the top of that hill, I was almost completely exhausted, but as I got a breath, there I was, able and ready to go on when the word was given. The men had been firing from the brow of the hill, and had shot down many of the artillerymen, and so many of their horses that they could not get their guns away. They stood to their guns well, only running when they

gallantry. Hood, who commanded them, put himself at the head of his old regiment, and with a 'Come on, boys!' led them on right gallantly. He is now a 'full' general, I believe, and his skill and valour deserve it."

"I cannot comprehend," said another, "how it was we lost so few, compared with the fearful carnage of the enemy."

"It would seem that 'quick' work suits us. Our lines were not so full as theirs, nor were reinforcements massed in our rear, and under fire, as with them. When the enemy fired, it was wildly; our men were cooler, and understood the use of weapons better, so that their shots all told, and sometimes hit double, passing through and through, whenever we came in view of regiments drawn up behind each other; and if we *did* overshoot at any time, such shots told in the rear."

"I cannot see how our men could miss them, wedged as they were in a corner of the field when retreating

---

could do nothing else. We pushed forward, and placed our colours upon the battery, but as the enemy were still firing upon us, we commenced firing in return. Pretty soon a strong force opened fire upon our left, and changing our front in that direction, we poured in a heavy fire, which soon brought them to taw, as the greater part of two regiments threw down their arms, and ran to us, bringing their colours. Having delivered them over to another brigade, we pressed on in front, and drove the last Yankee from the field. As night was coming on, we were halted, and drawn up in line of battle. It was indeed a sad sight to look at the old regiment, a mere squad of noble men, gathered around their tattered colours. I could not realize that this little band of fifty or sixty men was the 4th Texas. But it was even so. Out of five hundred and thirty men who went into the fight, there were two hundred and fifty-six killed, wounded, or missing; while many were completely broken down, and nearly every one was struck or grazed. We stayed here all night without interruption, being heavily reinforced during the night."

by that single road ; if more artillery had been present the carnage among them would have been fearful. He did it happen that our pieces were not up soon Robins?" addressing an artillery officer.

"We *were* up in time, but not called upon. I think the artillery have reason to complain of you infantry in taking up all the business, and not allowing us opportunity. Did you ever hear what Featherstone said of us? At Beaver Dam Creek, there were twelve pieces playing against twice as many of the enemy, and Featherstone, commanding, anxiously watched us, to cover his infantry. We fired very accurately and deliberately, our shot and shell chipping their embrasures in beautiful style, and slicing off the parapets in large cakes, rapidly silencing their pieces. Featherstone was in raptures, and exclaimed, 'By Jupiter, that beats all! Just look at our boys tumbling the breastworks about! Who would ever believe it of raw volunteers? Why, sir, the "regulars" could not beat them! Gentlemen, I must confess I entertained poor opinions of our artillery till now, and looked upon them as fit for little else but to waste ammunition, but the manner in which they fought and defeated Porter's "regulars" convince me that we are a superior stock altogether.' Highly complimentary, wasn't it? The boys deserved such praise, for the constancy with which they served the pieces on all occasions was astonishing, particularly two-thirds of them were never under fire before. Had we remained stationary, our loss must have proved very heavy, for the enemy were very expert in getting the range. The first company that crossed at Mead

Bridge was fearfully cut up. When the pickets were driven from the bridge, our four pieces galloped across very gallantly, under a galling fire from great odds, and they held their ground nobly. Rushing up the road, they took up position on a knoll, and the rapidity with which those pieces were served astonished every one. By the way, you have observed Lee's system of 'reliefs' on the march, or in battle?"

"Yes, and an excellent one it is. It is neither right nor fair that one division or brigade be always kept in front; but when fatigued it should be relieved by another. Our numbers never permitted this system before, nor did it ever attract my attention until 'Seven Pines,' and there I could not but admire its utility. When a regiment had been some time under fire and was exhausted, another moved up, and maintained the vigour of attack, while the first remained at supporting distance as a reserve. The same rule was adopted with brigades, so that our advance never slackened its impetuosity. This was also practised at Gaine's Mill and elsewhere, when practicable, and with marked effect. The Federals seemed to follow the same plan, but where the multitude of their regiments came from, is a mystery—there seemed to be no end of them."

"To be candid," remarked one very modestly, "I always entertained an idea, until this present war, that men were drawn out in a parallel line, and had to settle the business without shifting about so much as Lee seems to desire. A brigade or division is thrown forward, and after attacking until exhausted, another seems to take its place in some way incomprehensible



to me; while the first is allowed to rest a while, and then rushes forward again in some other direction, apparently as fresh as ever. Our brigade I think was moved about a dozen times at Gaine's Mill, but always had enough to do. It is impossible, however, for one in the ranks, or even a brigadier, to read the plans of a chief, all they know is their 'orders.' They are formed, and move forward or backward: fight, advance, fall back, advance again, and often find themselves at right angles with their first position. I suppose it is all right, and none of our business to inquire; but if fighting could be accomplished with fewer movements, it would please me infinitely more."

"That's the beauty of it!" said Dobbs, delighted. "That shows the brilliancy of a general's strategic genius. As you say, during the heat of battle, few, except those in charge of the wings or reserves, can conceive any true notion of what is intended or transpiring. On the open plains of Europe, the field of action could be seen at a glance,—but in such a varied country as ours, where most of the fighting is done in timber, it is impossible for any but a few to form an accurate notion of what is passing. I was talking with the aëronaut who ascended in our balloon during the week, and although several thousand feet above our battle-fields, and provided with powerful glasses, he was unable to ascertain anything with precision. All he saw was smoking woods, the flash of guns, and columns of men hurrying to and fro, along dusty roads and lanes, for the clouds of smoke and dust enveloping the scene were so dense that all seemed wrapped in

mystery. He plainly discerned M'Clellan's line of retreat, however, and made Lee acquainted with it; but when the Federals took to the swamps, and through the woods, all was obscurity again."

"Nevertheless, Federal balloonists have furnished their generals and journals with accurate maps of our position, but these were taken long before fighting commenced. But do you not think we might have done something on Saturday, and pushed the enemy more vigorously when on the north bank?"

"True, it seems that a whole day was lost, but then their fortified camps were in commanding positions, and I know not whether they *were* there on that day. I incline to the belief that they retreated on Friday night, and only maintained appearances during Saturday. It is certain that Magruder and Huger on the south bank were very slow, and were reprehensible for allowing so large a force to pass across their front, when pickets discovered their retreat on Saturday night."

"The enemy may boastingly talk of 'skedaddling,' but if the rear-guard did not hasten their movements down the railroad on Sunday afternoon, I'm no judge of running! It must have been a great mortification to the valiant Sickles to let all his beautiful silverware and private papers fall into our hands at 'Savage Station.'"

"Yes, and it must have delighted our railroad directors, when cavalry brought the news that they had left behind several magnificent locomotives just fresh from the maker's hands! When the railroad was cleared, a train was sent down, and two fine engines

were discovered on the bridge, with steam up, and the bridge on fire! They got the locomotives off, and the bridge was saved after some labour. Many cars were also found, up and down the track, all loaded, and apparently waiting for engines. Our advance had been too rapid, however, and the men were but too glad to escape with their lives."

"Poor old Casey got into disgrace again, I hear. He was in rear of their lines, and ordered to look after the hospitals and depôts, but had not time to destroy them, so decamped, leaving many sick and wounded behind."

"But of all the fighting I think that at Frazier's Farm was the most desperate," said Dobbs, drinking again, and getting steam up.

"Oh, you simply think so, major," said some one, laughing, "because hard marched and fatigued when you arrived there."

"*Think so?*" answered Dobbs, indignantly. "But I *know* so. Just fancy, travelling over twenty-five miles along sandy, dusty roads, under a July sun, and coming up with the enemy about sundown, and they formed on a rising ground ready for business? Had I been Hill I should have deferred matters until morning."

"Yes, and in the morning they would have vanished."

"Well, it was as well as it was," continued Dobbs. "We gave them a sound thrashing, but the villains fought obstinately enough, goodness knows! The position, as you know, was assailable only on one side, and as the road was an ascent their artillery ploughed our

advance unmercifully. The column was deployed without serious loss, however, but as we advanced through the timber the Federals met us at every turn, and for some time it was 'nip and tuck' with us, I can assure you. 'Forward' was the word continually ringing in our ears, and as we advanced up the 'rise,' and through the woods towards their camps in the open fields, the enemy made several desperate attempts to turn our flanks, but without success. I never saw troops behave better than ours; nor did they yield an inch from any captured position, though assailed again and again by reinforcements. Those immediately in front, however, had much greater difficulty in advancing, for they were exposed to the full fire of batteries. How they escaped annihilation is a mystery. Wilcox, Featherstone, and Pryor, did wonders, as usual, but their commands were sorely thinned by grape-shot, and many promising officers lost their lives there. The enemy's guns were not captured without a tremendous struggle; for since none of our pieces were on the ground, the fight on our side was maintained with infantry only. Advancing through those thick-growing pines, was no joke for a corpulent fellow like me; and it required some squeezing occasionally, which was not very comfortable with the enemy in line before you, firing showers of shot. Thank goodness! I escaped with a single scratch, for which I cleaved the skull of the Yankee who gave it me."

"It would not have proved so desperate and unequal had Huger co-operated."

"Oh, yes, *had* he done so! but who ever expects fast

movements from *him*? Had any of our divisions been within supporting distance we should have suffered less, but Magruder was at least five miles behind, and to attempt 'double-quick' movements along *such* roads, and through the timber at such a time of night, was impossible, for *his* men had been travelling all day also, and were perfectly exhausted. They did not arrive upon the ground until all was over; and had it not been for the invincible spirit of Hill, the field and booty would never have been ours. When we had driven the enemy from the ground, about 8 P.M., after over two hours of severe fighting, all supposed the affair was over, but as we continued to advance, about 9.30 P.M., such a terrific fire opened upon us that I thought the world was coming to an end. It was a fresh army corps sent against us! Such an apparition would have disheartened any one but Hill. He, seeing how matters stood, and that they were determined to attempt a capture of the field and spoils of war, gradually gave ground—no hurry, no confusion—and as his men deployed, sent to the rear for succour. That was a trying moment, my boys! Tired, perfectly exhausted, and ready to faint from fatigue and long fighting, there we were, a few shattered regiments of the advance, assailed at 10 P.M. by an entire corps! On the enemy came, cheering, and making night hideous with their noises; they fired, but we lay low, and, discovering their position, poured into them such accurate volleys that they slackened pace. Bidding us hold the ground a little while, Hill went to the rear, but no reinforcements had arrived; so, cheering on the remnants of some

few brigades, he moved them up at the 'double quick,' and they advanced with such loud shouts, and with so much apparent freshness, that the enemy, imagining reinforcements had reached us, declined to prolong the engagement, and left us masters of this second field."

"Yes, it was a brilliant affair," said Robins. "I was present, but our guns could not be brought into position. Considering the strong position of the enemy and the failure of Huger to arrive in time, it seems wonderful that Hill should have shown so much hardihood in attacking, and displayed such brilliant tact under adverse circumstances. It is evident M'Clellan felt sore about his defeat by a single weak division of ours, or he would not have hurried forward fresh masses to recover the ground. I know not how many guns fell into our hands, but counted six in one field, together with well-filled caissons, many prisoners, and small arms. It is a pity the advance did not fall on Hill when we attacked Malvern Hill, for I am sure our loss would not have proved so great."

"Yes," said Dobbs, "I am glad our brigade was not called upon, for we were too much weakened to have accomplished much; but from general report I should judge it was a very much mismanaged affair. Those who *were* engaged are furious against Magruder, and it is currently said in camp that responsible men have reported him to head-quarters for drunkenness and total incapacity upon the field. I know not the truth or falsehood of the rumour, but it seems to be generally agreed that, although he commanded the finest troops in the service, he has accomplished less than any

other general. The scene around Malvern Hill was awful. Battle-fields are sickening spectacles ; but that one was terrible. All the woods for miles around are disfigured by the enemy's shot and shell ; and as for iron bolts, thrown by the gunboats, I saw several to-day, each of them being about four inches in diameter and eighteen inches long. Those are fearful things to throw at the heads of respectable men of family like myself. If Yankee compliments are to be judged of by their length and weight, our enemies are the most villanously polite race of hypocrites on the globe ; and glad am I we have solemnly forsworn for ever all fellowship or communion with them."

"I am sorry, Robins, the artillery had not fitting opportunities, for I am enthusiastic in their favour," said Frank, "and think them more than a match for the Federals at any time."

"Thanks for the compliment. I am glad we find favour in some quarters ; for since the late fights everybody has been cursing the artillery for not getting up in time to participate in the engagement, when in fact it was an impossibility."

"Of course it was," chimed in Dobbs. "No artillery in the world could pretend to keep pace with infantry over such a rough country. Why, sir, the roughest lanes in Europe far surpass our best roads here ; for, ever since the war began, I have seen but one macadamized road in Virginia, and that was only thirty miles long ; all the rest are common dirt or sand roads, over which it is almost impossible to travel. What artillery in the world could have advanced the morning

after Malvern Hill? Rain poured in torrents, and cavalry-men could scarcely force their horses into a fast walk through the immense quantities of mud; as for the infantry, they manfully trudged along, knee-deep in mire. In Europe warfare is carried on differently. It usually happens there that the combatants meet in large plains, like Marengo, Austerlitz, Waterloo, and other places I have visited; and had it so chanced that *our* engagements were fought in such places, the war would have been long since decided. Our artillery are certainly not to blame for being behind time; the infantry marched too fast, and were hurried forward at the rate of thirty miles a day. Our youth seem predisposed in favour of artillery service; at one time nothing else was thought of in the whole South but artillery! artillery!"

"That spirit," said Robins, "was infused by the early exploits of the Washington Artillery Corps, Kemper's battery, and other organizations; and I must confess the efficiency of volunteers in that arm is surprising. Kemper's battery and the New Orleans Artillery never fired other than blank cartridges before Bull Run and Manassas; yet such was their precision that the enemy frequently withdrew disabled and humbled—I mean the Federal 'regulars.' I cannot help thinking that the enthusiasm and 'pluck' of our boys have much to do with it. Being accustomed to arms from infancy, they are excellent judges of distance, and will travel all day to witness fine shooting. The first shots fired by Kemper at Bull Run completely smashed up Porter's Artillery, and threw their reserves into utter confusion.



Besides, those in artillery service are young, active, wiry fellows, and jump about the pieces with the suppleness of cats, dragging their guns about by hand as if they were playthings. It is my opinion that the artillery branch of our 'regular' service will surpass the world in efficiency."

"Did you observe how gaily Major Walton brought six of his pieces into action towards the close of Malvern Hill? The trumpets sounded, and off they went to the front as nimbly as if they had not marched many miles that day."

"Yes," said Robins. "I was then about a mile to the rear, and it being nearly dark, could not well distinguish the features of those about me. Standing against the side of a deserted farm-house, converted into a field hospital, I saw an oldish-looking man dressed in a long overcoat and black felt hat drawn over his eyes, who was condoling with a grey-haired citizen about the loss of his son, but spoke in low tones; and I heard him say, with evident emotion, 'Yes, my friend, such is the fortune of this cruel, unnatural war forced upon us by Northern fanatics: yet all will be brighter soon. Yes, yes, our poor, poor boys have suffered much within these few days, but, thank God! all is progressing favourably.' He was about to mount when I addressed him, and inquired if there was any news from the field? He answered politely that 'nothing new had transpired; we were progressing slowly!' It was President Davis! He had been on the field all day, and was ordered from the front by Lee; nor would the guards permit him, as a citizen, to cross the lines again without a 'pass!' It

seems the President and two attendants had been close up to the front, and occupied an old deserted house, when Lee, being informed, requested him to go to the rear. He had not vacated the house more than five minutes ere four or five shells exploded and tore it down!

“One of the most gallant deeds I have heard was performed by a young Texan named Dickey at Gaine’s Mill. When his brigade charged the batteries, they were met, among others, by two New Jersey regiments. The shock did not last more than five minutes, for the Texans are remarkably good shots, so that after firing a volley they gallantly charged, and Dickey was fortunate enough to capture both standards! I saw them brought into Richmond by a cavalry escort, not less than two hundred prisoners following behind. It must have been a great mortification to them. That was ‘On to Richmond’ with a vengeance!”

“Wilcox, at Gaine’s Mill,” said another, “was in a terrible rage with his brigade, although as a temporary divisional general he commanded both Featherstone and Pryor. Finding that his men baulked a little at the brook, in face of obstruction and a heavy fire in front, he rushed forward, sword in hand, and threatened to cut off the head of the first Alabamian who hesitated to advance! All the generals were on foot, you know, so that it required much running about to keep the brigade in order; but, although Featherstone’s men were supposed to be a reserve of the division in that action, they became so restive that he advanced up the centre, and arrived at the top of the hill sooner

than the rest. Had he moved out of the woods alone his destruction was inevitable, for the artillery of the enemy was numerous and powerful. It is said that the sight of Wilcox, Featherstone, Pryor, Whiting, Archer, Hood, and others advancing afoot, sword in hand, cheering on their commands through the woods and up the hill, was most inspiring: the men cheered vociferously, and would have followed such commanders anywhere.

“‘Come on, boys!’ said little Whiting, who, though commanding a division, *would* lead his old brigade to the charge—‘Come on, boys!’ said he in front, waving his cap and sword—‘quick, is the word! Here they are before us; you cannot miss them! Steady! Forward, guide centre, march!’ and off they went up the hill, yelling and firing like madmen.\*

---

\* Brigadier-General Daniel P. Whiting is a native of New York, about 50 years of age, small in stature, thin, wiry, and active, an excellent officer in any department, and, though always in the infantry, proved himself an admirable engineer, by fortifying Harper’s Ferry, in May, 1861. He entered the old service 2nd lieutenant 2nd Infantry July 1st, 1832; was brevet major April 18th, 1847; and full major when hostilities commenced. He was assigned to Johnson’s command in the Shenandoah Valley, May, 1861, as chief engineer there—Johnson on many occasions testifying to his merit and industry. In the absence of General Gustavus Smith, Whiting always commanded the division, and proved himself an officer of great ability at “Seven Pines,” where he commanded the left attack. At the battle of “Gaine’s Mill” he won immortal honour by the skilful manner of handling his division; and to cheer on the men sprang to the front on foot, cap in hand, fighting his way up hill, through the timber, while his own brigade were cheering and making resistless charges. In fact, every brigadier did the same in that terrible conflict, while colonels acted as brigadiers, captains as colonels, and sergeants as captains. “Major” Whiting, as he is called, is much beloved by his men, and has always accomplished whatever he was ordered to do, which cannot be said of dozens of those who, without talent, have risen through social or political influence.

“Ambrose Hill, at Mechanicsville, was ever in the front, regardless of danger, and, although his coat was torn in several places, miraculously escaped. I wish I could add the same of poor Featherstone, at Frazier’s Farm, for he was desperately wounded towards the close of that fight; Colonel Taylor, of the 2nd Mississippi, was killed during the last volleys at the same place. I single him out from among many other officers, for he was generally considered to be one of the most promising young men in the service. His praise was on every lip, and he must have risen rapidly: he was nephew to old Zachary Taylor, hero of the Mexican war, and President of the United States.

“Young Taylor was highly educated in military matters, and could do more with raw troops than any officer I ever knew. President Taylor’s son is a brigadier, you know, and common report speaks of him as a highly scientific officer, and likely to eclipse his father’s fame, should opportunities present themselves.

“There were several regiments of conscripts who participated in the late battles, and fought excellently; in fact, I could not perceive any difference between them and the volunteers, for they never flinched, but carried every position assigned them. Conscripts or volunteers, native talent will sure to come out in times like these—blood *will* tell. I saw a youth marching out of action with the remnants of a Federal flag wound round a wound in his arm. ‘Where did you get it?’ I inquired. ‘I got *both* of them yonder—the wound and flag both. I shot down the colour-bearer; but there was a big fight over it, and before I got clear

some of our own men claimed it, and there was a general fight. Whether one of the Yanks shot me or not, I can't tell; but if the colonel hadn't come up and restored order, I should have been crushed to death, for there were at least half a dozen dead men on top of me; but having grasped the colours, they were torn from me, and this piece is all I've got. The rest is distributed among all the boys by this time. It wasn't good for much, so I bound up my arm with it! Darn 'em, I'm sorry I can't use this hand, or I'd go back, and make some of 'em howl, sure!'"

"A warlike friend of mine," said Dobbs, "who always had more to say about military matters than any half-dozen generals, was always talking of what *he* would do the first fight in which he participated. At Frazier's Farm one of the first men I met walking to the rear was Robinson, with his hand bound up. 'Hallo! Rob,' said I; 'what's the matter? Hurt?' 'Hurt? I guess I am—*slightly*! I hadn't fairly got into it, Dobbs,' said he, 'fore some villain wounded me, and here am I laid up for a couple of months, and never had the pleasure of killing one of them yet!' While talking to Rob, I saw a youth binding up his leg behind a tree, fifty paces to the right of me, and had even spoken to him kindly, when a shot came, tore down the tree, and whipped his head off clean to the shoulders!"

"The Yankees use their cavalry to force the infantry forward, I understand, and it would seem that the number of stragglers is very great with them; but in all my observations during the week's campaign, I

never counted more than two dozen men straggling in *our* rear at any time; but owing to the incessant marching and consequent fatigue, I reasonably expected to encounter many more. It seems a sense of honour animates our troops, and they will not give up while strength lasts to keep them going. I have frequently seen slightly wounded men, just from the doctor's hands, moving to the front again; and remember an instance of coolness in one middle-aged man which I can never forget. While riding to the front I met an Irishman of the 14th Louisiana, retiring to the rear, his rifle slung by his side, and a towel held to his face. 'Hurt, comrade?' I inquired. 'Yes, sir,' was the answer, in a rich brogue; 'the villains have hit me in the face,' said he, showing his cheek half shot away; 'but if it didn't bleed so much I should feel ashamed to go to the doctor's with such a bit of a scratch, for our boys are whipping the devils in elegant style, and I should like to be lending them a hand!' I told him to bathe his face in the brook, over which our men had just clambered, and giving him about a pint of spirits from my canteen, left him with his face well bandaged, sitting comfortably under a tree, smoking his pipe; while, not more than half a mile in front, the battle raged with great fury, and shell fell thick and fast in all directions.

"The greatest fortitude and patience were evinced by our men under suffering, and I never saw but one instance where any loudly complained. I have frequently seen men smoking when under the surgeon's knife, and heard the wounded salute each other wittily

about their hurts. ‘Hallo, colonel,’ said one fellow lying on a door, going through the process of having balls extracted, to his colonel, who was led forward for treatment: ‘sorry to see you hurt, colonel—it will be a long time ere either of us can dance in the Assembly Rooms, New Orleans, again.’ ‘Why, captain, is that you? you don’t mean to say they have “pinked” you at last, eh? The Yankees seem to be distributing their favours impartially to-day. Cheer up, old fellow, we are whipping them like the devil at all points, so I hear. Come along, doc—my turn next!’ ‘Just fill my pipe, doc,’ another would say, ‘before you commence cutting, and if you’ve got such a thing handy as a drink of whisky to give a fellow, it would considerably assist things, I think; sharpen that knife a little, it looks blunt. There, now blaze away, and get through in the biggest hurry you can—let it be short and sweet!’ &c.”

“Well, now that all is over, what is your notion of the comparative loss, major?” Frank inquired of Dobbs.

“From the amount of carnage\* it would be difficult to form a correct opinion. I do not know the loss on the several fields, but learn that the adjutant-general

---

\* From a Norfolk paper of a recent date we learn that “since the battles near Richmond, certain Irishmen at Old Point have hauled up in their seines large numbers of legs and arms which had been amputated from the wounded received at the fortress, and thrown to feed the sharks in the Roads. What will the Yankee nation say of the disposition made by their surgeons of the dismembered limbs of the army of the Potomac? They will anxiously inquire whether M’Clellan indeed retains so little of Virginia soil as not to afford him decent burial-place for the mangled limbs of his followers.”

says our loss amounts to about 15,000 killed, wounded, and missing; the number of the latter is comparatively small, so that we might say that in all the engagements of that eventful week we lost a grand total of 15,000 killed and wounded. Those figures are considered the maximum estimate."

"As to the number of guns and small arms captured, it would be difficult to say," remarked Robins, being referred to on that point. "From the Brooke Turnpike to Meadow Bridge I saw one: from the last-named place to and including Mechanicsville, I counted six—not reckoning siege-pieces taken in reverse; at Ellyson's Mills, Beaver Dam Creek, and Gaine's Mill, I saw twenty: at Frazier's Farm half-a-dozen, and at Malvern Hill as many more. Lee estimates the captured field-guns at forty or more, not including many siege-pieces, several dozen caissons and ammunition waggons, together with thirty thousand stand of arms, fit for use, and half-a-dozen or more stand of colours. There was a very large banner captured by Major Bloomfield, of Magruder's staff, when his division pushed down the railroad on Sunday afternoon. Prisoners state that this memorable flag was made by ladies in New England, and given to M'Clellan, to be raised on the dome of the capitol when the Federal forces entered Richmond!"

"As for their dead," a competent authority remarks, "from personal inspection of the various fields, I should judge they lost three times as many as ourselves, nor shall I be far wrong in estimating their casualties at forty thousand killed and wounded, not including more than seven thousand rank and file, a long list of officers,



and a dozen generals, now prisoners in our tobacco-warehouses. I see it stated in Northern journals that it is supposed M'Clellan has not more than sixty-five thousand effective men, at Berkley, out of a force of over 110,000 with which he commenced the week's campaign."

"In round numbers, then," said one, "it can be stated that our losses may be put at no higher figure than 15,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, without loss in generals; and that the loss of the enemy is not less than 47,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides several general officers killed and prisoners. In addition they have lost forty field-pieces, six or more siege-pieces, 30,000 stand of improved small arms, half-a-dozen flags, drums, full sets of brass instruments, thousands of tons of stores and ammunition; hundreds of waggon, caissons, horses, mules, tents; several fine locomotives, carriages, and freight cars; immense supplies of medicines, clothing, and shoes; important private and public papers, harness, fodder, and a thousand other things too numerous to mention."

"All these things we *know*," added Dobbs, "from ocular proof! How much more fell into our hands can only be learned from Stuart and other cavalry leaders, who have been scouring the whole country for weeks, and adding to the list every day. But what were the total of both armies prior to the week's operations—can any one tell?"

"I may form a correct idea," said Frank. During the battle of Gaine's Mill, I was sent across the Chickahominy to Magruder's quarters at Garnett's Farm—

almost in a direct line with the battle-field. President Davis, and many others, sat on the portico, observing the progress of the fight through their field-glasses, at a distance of not more than two miles in a direct line. Some one remarked to Magruder that Lee was pushing the enemy closely on the north bank, and that night would close upon another great victory. 'Yes,' Magruder answered, in his usual lisp, 'they ought to accomplish something, since they have Jackson, Longstreet, the Hills, Whiting, and others over there.' I heard President Davis remark, subsequently, to a senator, that our force *then* over the river was 50,000 men. Our force on the south bank, at that moment, did not muster more than 50,000, so that our whole effective strength did not reach to *more* than 100,000 fighting men.\* From observations I heard dropped by those high in command, it was generally believed, from the large number of Valley troops found with him, that M'Clellan's whole effective force amounted to *more* than 110,000 men, but at a rough guess it was that number, at the *lowest* estimate!"

"Well," said Dobbs, seizing the bottle, and half filling a tumbler, "the best and most accurate total is, that we have thoroughly whipped and routed them! So 'here's to Lee and our gallant boys!'"

The toast was responded to enthusiastically, and not until late in the night did the speech-making, patriotic, and song-singing company depart, leaving empty bottles, pipes, cigars, chairs, and tables strewn around the room

---

\* I have since learned that this estimate of the Confederate force is incorrect—it did not muster 90,000 effective men.

in artistic confusion, besides several of the 'glorious' company stretched at full length on the beds and floor!

The Northern army, swept from our front, had massed round the heights of Berkley, strongly fortified and reinforced, while a very large fleet of transports and gunboats was but a few hundred yards distant in the river, unloading supplies, and protecting the position from any sudden attack by the Confederates. The rebels, in the form of a semicircle, were intently watching and preparing for the further movements of M'Clellan, certain that should he dare come forth, the remains of his once proud and numerous army would be annihilated. M'Clellan, however, was far too weak and wise to attempt any advance, and retreat he dared not; had he stirred from his position to fall back down the peninsula, he would most surely have been overtaken and routed, but by remaining where he then was, the fleet was his protection and main hope. All this time the Federals under Pope were concentrating round Fredericksburg, and preparing to advance from the north and east, in which case M'Clellan, being reinforced, was, if possible, to co-operate on the peninsula. Pope took command of his army with a grand flourish of trumpets, and his bombastic promises highly delighted Northern leaders and newspaper writers, who, as usual, endeavoured to hide M'Clellan's inglorious defeats, by claiming them as victories. They argued that, although the latter had now but 70,000 out of more than 120,000 men, "he was considerably nearer Richmond than ever," and that "his change of base would culminate in the speedy reduction of the rebel capital!"

From early indications, Lee was satisfied that M'Clellan would not again operate on the peninsula, but had concluded to transport most of his forces to the Rappahannock, and form a junction with Pope. For this purpose, although maintaining daily picket-fights with our forces, immense numbers of transports assembled in the James River, and it was determined to try our rifled artillery upon them at some unsuspected moment. As a division of our troops, well concealed, were on the south side of the James, General Pendleton was ordered there with a hundred guns, and he concealed his movements under cover of thick timber. Everything being prepared and his own position admirably screened, Pendleton gave the signal, and all our guns opened with a deafening roar, shortly after midnight. Every shot told with fearful effect, for the guns had been sighted at sunset, and after a few discharges the vessels were rocking, and rolling, and crashing beneath our weight of metal, while to swell the uproar the gunboats instantly extinguished their lights, and commenced shelling us furiously. The enemy's missiles, however, passed overhead without disabling one of our guns, or killing more than three men in Dabney's heavy battery and wounding some half-dozen others. The loss among the shipping, on the other hand, was fearful, for as their transports numbered many score, and were all clustered together round Harrison's Landing, the crash of timber, the shrieks, the mingling of voices, and the general commotion were fearful.

But our artillery did not pay exclusive attention to the vessels, for as the camps and fires of M'Clellan's

army were clearly in view on the opposite hills, and not more than half a mile distant, showers of shell were thrown amongst them. Very soon barns and outhouses were in flames; the greatest confusion was apparent among the troops, soldiers in all sorts of attire rushing wildly to and fro. At length morning dawned, and where shipping had been in unsuspecting quiet the night before, nothing was now to be seen but floating wrecks or masts above water, stores, timber, bales, boxes, and boats thrown upon the beach; as for the enemy, not a tent or soldier could be seen for miles on their old camping-grounds; all had disappeared as if by magic. The destruction visible on every hand verified the fearful havoc which the night attack of Pendleton's artillery corps had occasioned among the dispirited but snugly provided-for enemy of the day before. The attack was so unexpected and violent that the enemy were paralyzed in the dead of night, and although neither their press nor generals ever mentioned the circumstance, except in ambiguous terms, we had other evidence that the disaster was appreciated by those who were the witnesses and sufferers by it. Prisoners of the better class subsequently confirmed our convictions that the loss was so great, and followed so quickly after their disastrous handling in the "Week's Campaign," that they *dared* not inform the North of the destruction of transports and supplies, or of the sudden change of camps during that fearful cannonade.

Some of Cobb's legion on picket-duty next day picked up many stragglers, who naively said that "the assault was so sudden, fearful, and accompanied with such havoc

and disorder, it seemed as if the Last Day had arrived ;” for regiments were hurriedly formed and marched away in the darkness, many having no other covering but their drawers. Many thought the occasion presented a fine opportunity for a night attack on the land side, but M'Clellan's favourite style of planting cannon on high grounds and throwing up strong entrenchments, had taught our men much respect for that branch of the service, although for the infantry they entertained an habitual and profound contempt, and were as ready to attack them by night as by day.

A few days subsequent to this success, M'Clellan made demonstrations as if intending to cross part of his force from Berkley and operate on the south side of the James River. Our infantry were withdrawn a few miles inland to Petersburg, to watch this new combination. It was known that heavy reinforcements had reached M'Clellan, and he seemed inclined to advance up both banks and attempt to destroy our water batteries at Fort Darling, so as to allow the gun-boats to proceed up the river to Richmond. He was closely watched by Lee, who had also been intently studying the programme of General Pope, now industriously engaged in gathering a large army north of the Rappahannock at Culpepper, with a strong advance-guard south of it near Gordonsville. It was well known to us that great expectations were entertained of Pope's movement towards Richmond, and that he had made extravagant boasts of his intentions to turn the tide of fortune, and sack Richmond in an incredibly brief time.

But as this new army was preparing to move round

our left, while watching M'Clellan with our centre and right more than a hundred miles away from it, division and bickerings seemed to exist in those two grand wings of the Federal army. M'Clellan, thoroughly defeated in his own attempt, looked upon Pope as an upstart and braggadocio, who, by dint of trickery and politics, had become chief favourite of the Cabinet, from which he could obtain any amount of support and unlimited supplies, which had been denied to the late Grand Army of the Potomac. More than this, it was known that one or more generals of division (General Kearney is evidence) had asked relief from duty under M'Clellan looking upon him as an arrant humbug, and had been assigned to Pope's army. General M'Dowell, also—who for many months before had been stationed at Fredericksburg, and was promised chief command of this movement when joined by Banks, Blenker, Milroy, Shields, and Fremont from the Shenandoah Valley and Western Virginia, but whose hopes had been destroyed by the rapid marches and victories of Jackson over those generals at various places—now felt extremely humiliated to find his plans and chief command entrusted to one incompetent, and himself rated as a third class subordinate in the same enterprise; General N. P. Banks, of Massachusetts, being second to Pope.

Politics had much to do with these appointments. M'Clellan was a democrat, and though opposed to abolitionism, never allowed party feeling to influence him, always taxing his capacity to the utmost to gain success. He had been defeated many times, and still was looked upon as an able man, particularly in the

South, where military critics reviewed his course impartially, and awarded that praise which ability and bravery deserved. Pope and Banks were both uncompromising negro-worshippers, and as military men were laughed at by the whole South. M'Dowell, also, was known to be a democrat, and, though too good a soldier to allow politics to interfere with duty, was discarded, and assigned an unimportant command, while striplings of the East, from political influence, were placed above him. All these things were fully known to us, and no movement occurred in either army of which we were not cognizant. Our lines before the enemy were so well kept that few were aware of any movement preparing, but as the foe were becoming very active on the line of the Rappahannock, and daily glorifying themselves in the newspapers about some trifling cavalry skirmish with our scouts, it was evident their advance under Banks was about to move into an eligible position. As soon as this was ascertained, his old friend, the inevitable "Stonewall," received marching orders with his division to proceed from the main army and creep upon him, which he did in his usual brilliant style, and with his wonted success.



## CHAPTER XIV.

Movements of Beauregard's Army in Mississippi, after the Battle of Shilo—Our Defences at Corinth—General Halleck takes Command of the combined Armies of Buell and Grant, and follows on to Corinth—Both Armies intrench—Magnitude of the Federal Works—Beauregard suddenly retreats to Tullahoma—Policy of his Retreat—The Federals do not follow—Part of our Force detached from Beauregard, and, under command of Van Dorn, sent to defend Vicksburg against the Fleet of Commodore Farragut advancing up from the Gulf, and Commodore Foote's Squadron of Gunboats coming down the River from St. Louis—Building of the Rebel Ram *Arkansas*—She forces the Mouth of the Yazoo River, and runs the Gauntlet of the Fleet—Night Bombardment of Vicksburg—Flight of the Federals—Capture of a Federal Despatch Boat.

“DEAR FRIEND,—My last letter contained details of the battle of Shilo on the first and second day; of the first day's victory, of Albert Sydney Johnstone's death; and of our reverse and retreat on the second day, before the combined armies of Buell and Grant. I also informed you that the retreat was covered by General Breckenridge, with his Kentuckians, and of the admirable manner in which he performed that difficult task. ‘General,’ said Beauregard, riding up with his staff, ‘we must retreat; we cannot maintain an unequal contest against such odds of fresh troops. The command of the rear-guard is given to you. This

retreat must not be a rout—if it costs your last man, it must not be so!’ The army was withdrawn from the field as if in review, and Breckenridge covered the retreat so skilfully that the enemy halted, and did not pursue us more than a mile from the field. This was partly owing to their own exhausted condition; for next day the pursuit was taken up by General Pope, who captured several hundred of our sick and wounded in the timber. Many, doubtless, were like those who lagged behind in your retreat from Yorktown—men who lacked patriotism, who had enlisted from disaffected or unsound districts, had become lukewarm, and, for the sake of peace and comfort, willingly became prisoners to the numerous and well-conditioned forces of the enemy.

“When we reached Corinth I was glad to hear that Price, with a division of Missourians, had crossed the Mississippi, and formed a junction with Van Dorn and a few Arkansians, the trans-Mississippi campaign being considered closed for some time. Within a few days, we learned that the tremendous forces of Grant and Buell, combined under command of Halleck, were slowly advancing. It was reported that they swarmed over the country like locusts, eating or destroying everything, carrying off property, capturing negroes, and impressing them into service.\* Driving in our pickets,

---

\* As a specimen of the behaviour of Federal troops in the West and South, I subjoin the following from their own organs:—The *Louisville* (Kentucky) *Democrat*, which for safety was printed over the Ohio river at New Albany, thus speaks of their soldiery in Athens, Alabama: “General Turchin said to his soldiers that he would shut his eyes for two hours, and let them loose upon the town and citizens of Athens—

they had occupied the Northern end of the New Orleans and Memphis Railroad; they had also seized Memphis,

---

the very same citizens who, when all the rest of the State was disloyal, nailed the national colours to the highest pinnacle of their Court-house enpola. These citizens, to a wonderful degree true to their allegiance, had their houses and stores broken open, and robbed of everything valuable; and, what was too unwieldy to be transported easily, was broken or ruined. Safes were forced open, and rifled of thousands of dollars; *wives and mothers were insulted, and husbands and fathers arrested if they dared to murmur*; horses and negroes taken in large numbers; ladies were robbed of all their wearing-apparel, except what they had on; in fine, *every outrage was committed, and every excess indulged in that was ever heard of by the most savage and brutal soldiery towards a defenceless and alarmed population*. All this was done by those who pretend to represent the United States Government. . . . I know similar acts disgraced the same brigade when we occupied Bowling Green (Kentucky), but the matter was hushed up to save the credit of our army, hoping it would never occur again."

The *St. Louis (Missouri) Republican*, a Federal journal, and the most responsible organ in the West, says—"In Monroe County, Missouri, near the Salt River railway bridge, as Mr. Lasley and family were returning from church, together with a party of young ladies and gentlemen, who were visiting them at their country-house, they found their dwelling and grounds occupied by Federal troops, who had been stationed at the bridge. Suspecting no harm, though finding the grounds guarded, they advanced towards their residence, when Mr. Lasley was ordered to get down and go to Palmyra. He replied, that they must permit him to enter the house, and get a thicker coat, as he would be absent all night. This was not allowed; but they placed him, and James Price (young son of a poor widow), and young Ridgeway (only son of aged parents), in front of the Federal lines. They were then insulted grossly by the officer commanding, without explanation of any kind; and Mrs. Lasley, thinking they were going to be shot, rushed towards her husband; but Mr. Lasley and young Price fell dead at the one moment, and from the same volley. Young Ridgeway ran to the woods, but was pursued and shot. Mr. Lasley and young Ridgeway had both taken the oath of allegiance, and were under heavy bonds. Before this crime was committed the soldiery had taken possession of Mr. Lasley's house, had helped themselves to everything they needed, had forced the old cook to prepare dinner for them, and destroyed many articles of furniture, &c." These are but mild instances of what the Federal soldiery have done, in various places, to harmless citizens.

sunk our little improvised fleet of gunboats there, after a noble fight, in which we inflicted considerable loss; had pushed along the Charleston and Mississippi Railroad, the west end of which they occupied; and had camped about three miles from Corinth.

“This was a startling position for us, truly!—our main railroad communication with Richmond, *viâ* Chattanooga, in the enemy’s possession, and we obliged to travel many hundred miles round by way of Mobile, Alabama, and Georgia, to keep the communication open! As there are but two lines of railroad, both had been taxed to the utmost before this disaster. What could we do with but one, while the enemy had several outlets by land and river communication as well for advance as supplies? To add to our misfortunes, Corinth was a wretched site for a camp, utterly destitute of water, good or bad, and what little could be obtained was scooped up from the sand, or from pools fed by occasional rains. You are acquainted with the place, having camped here before going to Virginia; and you know, although there were at that time not more than 10,000 men here, the water was so bad that many gave ten cents a gallon for such as they could get from an indifferent well at the hotel. Except to keep open the railroad traffic with the south, Beauregard would not have held the place five minutes, particularly as out of 35,000 men present, the heat, insufficient and bad food, wretched water, and other causes, had reduced our effective strength to about 25,000.

“To these disagreeable circumstances add the fact.

that Halleck did not seem inclined to fight us in our breastworks, but occupied ground north of the town, which, you know, is higher than our side, and, intrenching himself there, depended on time and patience to work up till within shelling distance, and then destroy us at leisure. Notwithstanding our small force, and the tremendous odds against us, Beauregard put a bold face upon matters; frequently marched out and offered battle, but, to our surprise, found the enemy unwilling to leave their entrenchments, which grew larger and more numerous every day. Halleck's losses, however, must have been truly appalling; for, if our own troops were discouraged, though born on the soil and accustomed to the heats, rains, sudden changes, and abominable water, what must be said of men suffering from similar causes, who were never South before in their lives, and who had been accustomed to every necessary in the field?

“As long as Halleck held the railroad in our front and another on our left flank, he seemed sufficiently contented to advance slowly upon us, and having more or less completed a vast line of elaborate breastworks, began to manœuvre on our right, so as to gain possession of the east branch of the Mobile and Columbus road; thus leaving Beauregard in possession of but one line to the south, viz. the south branch of the New Orleans and Memphis Railroad. This intention was early perceived by Beauregard, who moved counter to the design, without weakening Corinth itself.

“The labour and pertinacity of Halleck were wonderful. Having to make roads as he advanced into the interior, he employed large bodies of men, and when

trenches were opened before Corinth, his army had completed several fine military roads from the Tennessee River to his immediate front. By these roads ponderous guns and immense trains of supplies were drawn from his base of operations on that river, so that for a distance of thirty miles or more, ox, horse, and mule teams were unceasingly moving by night and day, to facilitate the construction of his works. Sickness, however, greatly weakened his forces, and chills, fevers, chronic disorders, and agues, filled the hospitals. Still, his sanitary system was much superior to ours; scores of deep wells were bored, and an ample supply of water obtained for his men, while we in Corinth were almost decimated for the want of a sufficient quantity; and the surrounding country was filled by our sick men, too weak to stand, reduced to skeletons from heat and exposure.

“It soon became obvious that if Halleck would not advance from his works, we should either be compelled to retreat at no distant day, or be massacred at discretion by the enemy’s guns, which were daily advanced nearer and nearer with apparent impunity. The Federals were sorely afraid we would retreat, as in that case their mammoth trenches and laboriously constructed roads would but ill repay them for their patience and long-suffering. This affliction, however, we could not spare them. Immense roads, as I have said, had been dug and levelled through miles of timber, unheard-of supplies of shot, shell, and mammoth mortar batteries had been brought to the front with infinite labour, and much sacrifice of life and money, when early one morn-

ing our whole army quietly decamped towards Tullahoma, and ere the mists had risen were beyond sight or hearing !

“A few regiments were thrown out to our front as usual, and maintained picket-firing, but were much surprised to receive orders to fall back; they could not believe the army had left, for the movement had taken place so quietly, orderly, and unexpectedly, that it required ocular proof to convince them of the fact! When the pickets retired from the front, the enemy quickly perceived it, and, though much astonished, prepared to pursue. Mortified at the failure of their designs, they followed our trail vigorously, and, owing to some miscarriage of orders, two trains of miscellaneous, but not valuable baggage, fell into their hands, together with several hundred sick, and a few old arms. I cannot say with absolute certainty, but believe we did not lose a single gun, caisson, or a pound of ammunition; to account for which it is necessary to add that Beauregard had been quietly withdrawing from Corinth for a space of three weeks, but so strictly had all orders been fulfilled, and so secretly, that three-fourths of the army were ignorant of the fact, and would not believe it! It was true, nevertheless, and had it not been for the accidental capture of the two small baggage-trains, through wilful carelessness, this celebrated retreat would perhaps stand unrivalled in the history of warfare, as being the most secret, successful, and disastrous blow which a feeble army ever dealt to an all-powerful and confident enemy.

“Your description of Johnson’s retreat from Manassas

leads me to believe that Beauregard was desirous of emulating your commander; the result at any rate does him infinite credit. Halleck had stored his camps with immense supplies: he had destroyed hundreds of horses, waggons, mules, and carts, in the work of transportation; had prepared for a bombardment of an indefinite period; built magazines and barracks, repaired railroads, and erected bridges, *thus occupying the whole spring in preparation*; and now in one moment all these plans were thwarted and the hot season too far advanced for his troops to move a mile farther into the interior! The disappointment was equal to the loss of a battle, if not worse. As for ourselves, save a few hundred sick, and the baggage-trains already mentioned, together with two old locomotives, we lost scarcely anything worth mentioning, and arrived at Tullahoma without adventures of any kind, save flying rumours from the rear, where General Pope was following us up, shelling the woods furiously on every hand, but never approaching within gun-shot of our rear-guard. The distance was twenty miles south of Corinth, and the place selected for our stand an excellent one to protect the south branches of the Mobile and New Orleans railroads. The season, as I have said, made it impossible for the enemy to follow (it was the month of June), so, finding a supply of good water, and eligible sites for fortifications, we settled down comfortably, and had no fear of consequences.

“You may imagine Halleck’s chagrin on discovering our retreat! as might be expected, the whole North was railing at us for running away, calling us ‘cowards,’



for not remaining to be shelled out at discretion! Much comment, too, has been made in our army regarding this movement; it took the Confederacy by surprise; opinions differ materially, and it is said that the War Office blames Beauregard for allowing himself to be driven to any such necessity. I doubt this report, but let us reason the matter a little, though I am not aware of the opinions formed by military critics in Virginia regarding it. '1st. Why did B. fall back upon Corinth and fortify it, after the defeat at Shilo? To protect communication by the two main roads intersecting there.' '2nd. Was that object accomplished, or could he have done so by remaining there? No; the fall of Memphis gave all the roads north of Corinth to the enemy; they approached and threatened B.'s left along the western branch of the Mobile and Columbus road, which was unavoidable, and were manœuvring on his right to gain the eastern section; Corinth was indefensible, and by falling back he protected the southern branches of both roads, had a better position to fortify, and the health of his troops secured.' '3rd. But why fortify and decimate his troops by remaining there, when its indefensibility was seen at a glance? To hold their large unacclimated army in check, decimate them in a much greater ratio than his own, compel them to waste their only available season fruitlessly, and gain the objects of a campaign, without shedding blood!' '4th. But did B. prove himself a general in allowing Halleck to approach by parallels, when he could have prevented it by counter-works? No, if Halleck had gained the object of these works; yes, because he in-

tended to leave, and did leave, them, ere the bombardment opened!’ ‘5th. What then did B. gain by holding, and in finally leaving, Corinth? He gained time; held the enemy in check without a battle—the result being as valuable as if gained at the price of blood—and by retreating at the time he did, out-generalled the enemy, rendered them powerless to move, and saved Mississippi from the inroad of a large army, which would have followed him into the interior at an earlier season of the year, but was now unable to do so from weakened forces and the great heats.’ ‘Did not B.’s army suffer extremely, and what was the ratio between friend and foe from the same causes? The army suffered extremely from sickness, but not mortality; while, from being unacclimated, the reverse was the case with the enemy—the ratio between us in mortality was as seven to one! The figures are from the acknowledged returns of both generals. Our extraordinary expense in holding Corinth during the spring was but trifling; Halleck’s expenditure was enormous in amount.’

“But to return to my narrative:

“We had scarcely arrived at Tullahoma ere it was known that Farragut’s fleet from New Orleans and Foote’s from the Upper Mississippi were approaching, to unite against the batteries at Vicksburg—the only town which prevented the free navigation of the river by the enemy. As it was thought that a land force would co-operate with the gunboats, our brigade was sent to assist in the defence of the stronghold. Van Dorn was appointed to command the post, and did

everything in his power to place the city in a good posture for defence.

“Vicksburg, situated on the east bank of the river, did good service as a *depôt* and rendezvous for the trans-Mississippi States during the war, being the only safe crossing place for us. Thousands of men, supplies, and *matériel* were continually passing to and fro—much of our provisions for the armies in the east and west being derived from Texas, parts of Louisiana, and Arkansas. In short, could the enemy silence our batteries and seize the town, all the agricultural products of the Northern and Western States would pass down unmolested to the Gulf; the enemy would gain free access to the whole river front, supply themselves abundantly with cotton, sugar, molasses, and other products, disjoin the east and west Mississippi States, and, having us fairly on the flanks, could operate with impunity upon numberless points, divide our forces, and perhaps subjugate us piecemeal. The east bank of the river, for several miles above Vicksburg, gradually rises higher than the common level, so that immediately above the city there are high bluffs, which command the river, north and south, cover the town, and can sweep the peninsula across the stream, formed as it is by windings of the river, and subject to overflows. The Mississippi, above Vicksburg, runs west to east, and, suddenly bending, runs north and south; so that the point of this peninsula came immediately under our guns at the bluffs, and few boats could pass or repass without receiving damage, since the stream at that point was not half a mile across, and the navigable

channel immediately under our batteries! As will be seen at a glance, Vicksburg was an all-important point to the enemy, who, apart from military ends, desired free navigation for their commerce; it was a vital position to us, for the same reasons, independent of the fact that its occupation would end our campaigns west of the river, throw those States into the hands of the enemy, and cut us off from regular and large receipts of commissary stores.

“As the enemy had swept everything before them on the river north and south of Vicksburg, it was considered we could make but a feeble resistance. The country around was only a cotton district, short of agricultural supplies, and connected with the interior and main army at Tullahoma by a single track of railroad, much overworked and unsound. As June advanced, and the rivers began to rise, the smoke of numerous gunboats above and below the city proved that the enemy were busy reconnoitring, and slowly approaching their object. Foundries and workshops were kept busy night and day; timber was hewn on every side for breastworks, magazines, and hospitals; and, within a few days, formidable earthworks and rifle-pits were dug on every hand, the river bank being lined with marksmen to sweep the decks, should an enemy appear. The streets running parallel with, and at right angles to, the stream, were cleared of all combustible material, and orders were given for women and children to leave immediately. The former, for the most part, refused to go; many dug holes in the ground, and made them bomb-proof and

comfortable, so that, if forced by the gunboats, they could seek refuge therein. The whole town was burning with patriotism, and women were more fierce, if possible, than the men.

“All was prepared for the expected bombardment, yet business went on as before, to some extent, and there was nothing of that flurry and excitement visible among the people which thoughts of a cannonade might naturally create. Batteries on the bluff were manned night and day, but so concealed, it was impossible to discover the position or number of pieces. In truth, we had not more than twenty guns, and our artillerists were mere novices. They were eager for the ‘fun,’ however, and were ably supported by some splendid troops from Louisiana, Kentucky, and Mississippi, who would ‘rather fight than eat.’ The women seemed to have changed their feminine natures; they wished every building crushed to powder, rather than give up; and if any of the Northern soldiery could have seen them, young and old, arming for the worst, and bent on mischief, it would not have given them a very pleasing idea of the reception prepared for a Federal landing! Everything ingenuity could devise was resorted to by chivalric dames to facilitate military preparations—expense, loss, fatigue, and danger were despised, and all were in rivalry to make sacrifices for the common cause, and even stripped sheets and blankets from beds for the use of the sick. More than this: it was announced that the commandant of the town needed flannel for ammunition, and none could be obtained; in less than an hour, several hundred flannel petticoats were

sent to him with compliments of the late wearers! Could women do more?

“I was on picket-duty one morning at the river bank, south of the town, when a gunboat was seen coming up round the bend, with a white flag flying, and much speculation ensued as to the cause. A boat soon landed at the wharf, and communicated with the commandant, asking for the surrender of Vicksburg, in the name of Commodore Farragut, U. S. N. The answer was instant—‘Mississippians never surrender!’ and the gunboat departed. All now knew what was in store, and began cleaning arms, preparing for the combined attack of both fleets, which none could doubt would attempt to unite and destroy us. The following day, from bluffs above town and on high grounds at the mouth of the Yazoo, a few miles above Vicksburg, we could plainly see Foote’s fleet of gunboats, rams, and transports steaming down towards us, and at evening descried the smoke ascending from their funnels, while anchoring west of the peninsula before described. From the winding of the river, this peninsula faces—or, as sailors would say, ‘lies broadside to’—Vicksburg, being about half a mile across; so that were it not for timber, a vessel would be in sight for twenty miles or more, ere rounding the point, and passing under the bluffs.

“A day or two after an answer had been returned to Farragut, one of his iron-clads was signalled from below; and soon after appearing round the southern bend put on steam, and advanced rapidly and boldly towards us, evidently bent on running the gauntlet of

our guns, and joining Foote's fleet, snugly anchored west of the peninsula, and screened from view by the woods. Coming within distance, it was perceived she carried numerous and heavy guns, was shot-proof, and had no one visible on deck! When nearing town, under full head of steam, some of her ports opened, and heads thrust out, shouted to pickets on the bank, 'Oh, you God d—d sons of ——!' and a torrent of such like compliments. They were instantly answered by a volley of small arms, and quickly dropped the port-screens. When abreast of the city, and steaming boldly to round the point, three or four of our guns opened fire with round shot, which plunged about the gunboat, spurting up jets and columns of water around her. Still pushing forward, her helm answered readily, and when rounding the point and abreast of the bluffs, a quick succession of bright flashes glanced from her dark sides, and, amid deafening roars, the ground was ploughed up in all directions round our guns, while quick answers from our side made the water spout around her, as if a thousand whales were blowing. Thus it continued for some time, without intermission—the gunboat throwing eleven-inch shell, and our batteries vomiting round shot. Though not disabled, it was clear the boat had been repeatedly struck; yet when rounding the point and getting out of danger, she gallantly presented her port guns to the batteries, and, giving a parting broadside, was soon hid from view by the trees, and safely anchored with Foote's flotilla.

“It was now apparent that we could do but little

with the enemy's iron-clads, for our shot glanced from their sides in showers of sparks, and damaged them but slightly: so that it was deemed necessary to erect a strong battery south of the town for the better reception of other visitors. They were not long in coming, for being informed of the inefficiency or insufficiency of our batteries, several others ran past, inflicting no injury, but in many cases receiving much. The two fleets having now formed a junction, prepared to bombard the town, and by way of preliminary, to get the range, sent several dozen eleven-inch shell across the peninsula, which, save a horrible screaming noise, did little harm, more than throw up tremendous clouds of dust and sand wherever they chanced to fall. The transports of the enemy now began to assemble rapidly, until a truly formidable fleet was gathered, and all imagined them heavily freighted with troops destined to co-operate on land. Had the peninsula been less thickly timbered, our batteries could have played sad havoc among them, for the distance was not more than a mile in a direct line, yet every shell thrown by us was waste of ammunition, since the vessels were so close in shore, that it required more skill than our gunners possessed to clear the woods with nicety and drop shell among them, drawn up as they were in single line, broadside to the beach.

"But while the enemy at early dawn or in the cool of evening, and even long after starlight, were amusing themselves with cannonading, Commodore Lynch and a few young naval officers were up the Yazoo River, preparing a little surprise for them. Having blockaded



the passage to the enemy with immense rafts, cut in, and floated down from, extensive forests in that vast region of swamps, they commenced building a huge rough iron-clad, called the *Arkansas*, which was destined to sally out and drive off the enemy. The Federal commodores were fully aware of our activity up that river, and correctly informed by negroes of all our doings with the ships and craft which had taken refuge there. The *Star of the West*, which attempted to reinforce Fort Sumter at the beginning of the war, had been captured by us off the Gulf Coast, and taken into New Orleans ; but when Farragut took that city, this, with some three or four other sea-vessels, and a fleet of magnificent Southern steamboats, steamed up the Mississippi, and had run far up the Yazoo river, and were then under the orders of Commodore Lynch. The enemy had detached three of their finest gunboats from the fleet at Milliken's Bend, to watch the mouth of the Yazoo ; and to be ready for any emergency, they kept up steam night and day. So much for the Yazoo at present, but I shall have more to tell you by and by.

“ The Federal fleet maintained a hot and vigorous cannonade upon the city at all hours, save during the intense heat of mid-day. Their troops were landed from transports, but never came within view. From scouts, who volunteered as spies, we ascertained that they had seized hundreds of negroes in that part of Louisiana, and were actually digging a canal from Milliken's Bend across the peninsula, which, it was hoped, would divert the waters of the river from its proper bed, and leave Vicksburg high and dry as an

inland city! The idea was a bold one, and originated with General Pope, who, not able to pass 'Island No. 10' some months before, dug a canal across a small peninsula near New Madrid in Missouri, and got safely in the rear of the island, and captured it. The present undertaking, however, did not promise like results; for the stream was strong, and would not be diverted. Hundreds of men, both whites and blacks, sank and died under the labour of cutting this canal, before the attempt was discontinued.

"And still the bombardment progressed. Thousands of shell, round shot, and other missiles were hurled at our devoted city; but, strange to say, except in some half-dozen instances, I know not one house which was more than slightly injured. The enemy, on the other hand, suffered much from their very inaction. The heats of July and the fever of August told fearfully upon the unacclimated troops, cooped up in their ships amid smoke and heat, and the deathly night vapours of the land and water. Though suffering extremely in every way, they were farther from realizing their hopes than ever. It was computed they had at anchor more than twenty gunboats playing on the city, together with a land force of several thousand men, and scores of transports and flats. Ordnance officers affirmed that they had fired more than 12,000 11-inch and other shells during the month, without counting rockets, round shot, and iron bolts. For a few days they were inactive, but did not prepare to depart. They had abandoned the canal project after digging more than a mile, and negroes informed us that

their wheelbarrows and tools were scattered around the peninsula, where every house was converted into an hospital. The commodores were nonplussed; and as their large fleets lay at anchor on the rippleless copper-coloured river, with a cloudless sky, under the scorching sun of August, without the echo of a voice, without the motion of a leaf, or the flapping of ensigns from a breath of air, the cries of sand-cranes flying to and fro reminded one of some river of death, with hospitals for ships and spectres for crews.

“But while the enemy were thus inactive, Commodore Lynch was hard at work night and day, ably assisted by young officers and citizens fitting out the ram *Arkansas* in the Yazoo River. The name of this stream literally means ‘River of Death,’ so called by the Indians (Choctaws) from the fevers, chills, and agues, which it caused in ancient times. In a direct line north from Vicksburg, it is not more than twelve miles distant; so that it formed an admirable protection to our right flank, and in case of attack, Haynes’ Bluff, some miles from the mouth, was well fortified and mounted, while yet farther above was moored an enormous raft made of huge rough logs, and so constructed that it could be opened from above, but not below. A few miles still beyond (near Yazoo city) Commodore Lynch had improvised a ship-yard, and was busy in reconstructing various boats for river service. You smile, perhaps, but let me explain, and your sarcasm may change into admiration for the indefatigable industry of those engaged there.

“In the first place, although several small steam sea

vessels, and a magnificent fleet of river passenger and freight boats had escaped from New Orleans, and were far inland, up the Yazoo, they were not safe. Naval officers knew the enemy would soon visit the mouth of the river, and accordingly they lost no time in building a raft to retard their progress, and put bounds to Federal curiosity. Many old rafts of huge cypress logs found moored in the Yazoo and its tributaries were floated down; woodmen were busy in the timber at various places, cutting down immense trees, the sound of whose fall, crashing in the forest, was like distant thunder, so that in less than a week a raft was formed in two parts, which, when made fast, would stand 'butting' from all the 'rams' in Lincolndom. Nor could the enemy fire it, for the timber was so green, or so perfectly saturated from months and years of exposure in the water, it might well defy all the turpentine North Carolina could produce in a century to kindle a single stick of it. This necessary work having been speedily and well accomplished, Lynch and his officers razed one of the vessels, and began the formation of the ungainly *Arkansas*. Carpenters, wood-choppers, sawyers, blacksmiths, voluntarily gave a hand to expedite proceedings, an old engine was placed in her, and the work of plating commenced. But how were they to get a sufficient supply of plates, bolts, screws, and machinery, remote as they were from every source of supply, in an out-of-the-way river, far from Vicksburg, thirty miles from the nearest railroad station, and close to a very small town, devoid of everything but cotton and pretty women? It would puzzle me to tell how, but by

superhuman exertions many things were procured, the vessel was completed, four large guns were placed aboard, and sufficient ammunition; and, lastly, plenty of volunteers were not wanting to man her, particularly as it was certain she would have terrible fighting to do ere reaching Vicksburg, the point of destination.

“When finished and ready for service, I visited her, and seeing how much indifferent material had been used in the construction, concluded that she would be sent to the bottom in less than no time, when opposed to the magnificent rams and iron-clads watching for her at the mouth of the Yazoo, or drawn up in parallel lines to receive her when passing the channel of the great river. She was large, rough, strong, and ungainly — vulnerable in many places, and the top imperfectly covered; so that should a stray shell drop through the roof, her destruction was almost certain, as the magazine was somewhat exposed. Many were desirous of commanding, as it was hoped she might eclipse the doings of the old *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads, which sank two large frigates and damaged the *Monitor*; but, after a little reflection, Commodore Lynch gave her in charge of a Mississippian, late of the old naval service, whose name was Brown. This officer grumbled much at the deficiencies apparent in the craft, and particularly at the engines, which were old, and of doubtful capacity.

“‘Do you refuse to command, sir?’ asked the little commodore; ‘if there is anything you object to in her, state it, and I will go myself—either you or I must command!’

"‘I do not object, sir,’ was the quick reply. ‘If you take command, I only ask to be captain of a gun—for I’m bound to go in her, in one capacity or other.’

"‘Very well, sir,’ said the commodore, going ashore in his quiet, meek manner; ‘make things ship-shape immediately, and wait for orders.’

"Things were soon prepared, and orders received. It was deemed advisable to keep the hour of her departure a secret, yet it became known in some way to the enemy at the mouth, who steamed off-and-on all the time. At night the raft was unexpectedly opened by a few midshipmen, and the *Arkansas* slowly and noiselessly floated several miles down the stream, and was perfectly lost in the dense fogs which fall at evening. Next morning, at daylight, steam was raised, and by keeping close to the heavily timbered banks, she cautiously proceeded; and, as the fog lifted, espied three of the enemy’s finest gunboats and rams in the river, near the mouth. Two of them backed down into the Mississippi, while the largest opened fire immediately, and very briskly. The *Arkansas* was moving but slowly on account of her defective engines, but fired deliberately and with telling effect, crippling the enemy at the first broadside, who ran their magnificent craft upon the bank, and struck colours at the moment our boat was passing. Captain Brown, finding his engines to be useless, depended solely upon the stream, and could not stop to take the splendid prize, for he knew many boats would soon appear to oppose his exit from the mouth of the Yazoo; so, although using more steam

than could be generated, he boldly pushed into the Mississippi, rapidly firing at the two gunboats retreating before him.

At this point of the action we could discern all that transpired, from our batteries on the bluffs. As soon as the *Arkansas* rounded from the Yazoo, the whole Federal fleet hoisted anchor, and formed in two lines—one each side the channel! Frigates, rams, gunboats—all were ready to annihilate that iron-clad mass of timber slowly floating towards them. Presently an iron-clad left her position, and boldly steaming up between the lines of dark hulls, opened fire at a considerable distance. The *Arkansas* was silent, and nothing was seen but a rush of steam as the monster slowly entered the channel, which seemed to please her single enemy, who steamed up nearer and fired again. In an instant the bow gun of the rebel replied, smashed the boiler and machinery of the enemy—men jumped overboard, and the vessel sank immediately! This exasperated the fleet, which now opened with a terrific roar from both squadrons, until the side of the *Arkansas* looked like a mass of sparks floating between parallel lines of curling smoke. Few dared approach, however, and those who dared to do so received such a fearful handling that they immediately put back, and were content to fire at a distance. To us, on the bluff, spectators of the scene, the slowness of the *Arkansas* was unaccountable, for she seemed encircled with fire and doomed to destruction ere emerging from the ordeal. ‘What’s the matter with her?’ ‘Why don’t she clap on steam and rush through them?’ ‘They’ll sink her in three minutes!’ were the

remarks of all. Yet onward she came, slowly picking her way, the enemy believing she was only enticing them in her path by apparent slowness! This was not the case, however; her engines were worthless, and audacity alone was carrying her through. Still fighting at long range, the Federal fleet slowly followed, and the nearer she approached the bluff the quicker the *Arkansas* fought, until finding her safely under our guns, the enemy gave up the chase, and amid our cheers on the bluff, and a salvo of guns, the *Arkansas* slowly turned the Point and was moored before the city!

"From the commotion visible among the enemy's vessels of all classes, the activity of small boats passing to and fro, and the succession of signals exchanged between commanders, it was evident that many of them were badly crippled, for several were towed to the banks, and run upon the sand. One vessel had sunk, several were towed away, while the vigorous working of pumps among them testified that shots had penetrated in different quarters, and that they felt infinite relief in the escape of the *Arkansas*. Various fragments of wreck soon floated down from the scene of conflict, which proved that chance shot had visited more than one unlucky transport; while with glasses we could perceive two powerful gunboats at the mouth of the Yazoo, which, like ants, were dragging their crippled companion out of further danger.

"It was vexatious to think that all the spoil was escaping us, and we felt particularly annoyed that the gunboat which had struck her colours to the *Arkansas*



in the Yazoo should thus easily escape, for it was the finest in the fleet. It could not be helped, however, and when the truth became known, regarding the utter failure of our engines, and the danger to which the *Arkansas* had been exposed during her passage, we could only feel surprise that she had done so well, and inflicted so much loss upon the enemy; had the fleets known the true cause of her slow progress, not a fragment of her would ever have floated down so majestically and triumphantly.

“Towards evening, many of the enemy’s transports moved up the river, and preparations were made on board the gunboats which seemed to indicate that powder and ball were intended for us in earnest. As night closed in, none expected an engagement of any kind, but alarm-guns warned the garrison to be on the alert, when, sooner than expected, several vessels appeared before our upper batteries, and the engagement opened with great fury. While the bluff batteries were contending with most of the fleet, several of Farragut’s squadron ran past, and opened with an awful roar upon the *Arkansas*, lying broadside to shore; while several boats from below engaged our guns south of the town. Although the night was quite dark, so frequent and rapid were the flashes of the guns on both sides that everything was distinctly visible. The noise was astounding. The bluff batteries above, and south batteries below, the town, seemed all on fire, while the *Arkansas*, engaged with several heavy gunboats and frigates, was rocking from the immense weight of metal hurled at her every moment; but as she was bound fast

to shore, and the enemy could not remain stationary in the stream, their vessels slowly drifted past toward the lower batteries.

“For a long time this unearthly noise was maintained on both sides, and it was once supposed that Farragut’s boats would grapple with the *Arkansas* and take her; but such was her steady and destructive fire, that they slunk off in the darkness to longer distance, and never seemed inclined to try it again. The woods facing Vicksburg were literally blown down by chance shots from our side, while the river was all afoam with hundreds of water columns rising and falling every minute from the same cause. It is more than probable that if our batteries had not concentrated their fire upon the enemy engaged with our solitary iron-clad, it would have fallen into their hands; but such a shower of shot and shell assailed them from three points, and so incessant was the storm of small-shot poured into their ports and decks, that it was impossible for a human being to appear without instant loss of life. After a fierce and obstinate engagement, the enemy’s boats escaped down the river in a crippled condition, while the upper fleet moved up stream with great expedition amid the prolonged and enthusiastic cheering of our garrison and citizens, who lined the works, making night hideous with their wild and defiant shrieks.

“Thus ended the first bombardment of Vicksburg. I am sorry to say that not less than four or five of our men were killed and some half-dozen wounded on board the gallant iron-clad, most of them receiving injuries in the night attack of the enemy’s gunboats. Beyond

these casualties I hear of none whatever throughout the garrison. All are in the highest spirits, and desirous of meeting the enemy again at any time and in any number.—Yours always,

\* \* \*

“P.S.—I open this to say that our cavalry and a light battery far up the river have succeeded in capturing the Federal despatch-boat, and destroyed it, after securing all the letters and despatches of the fleet. I glean this from head-quarters; the telegram came an hour ago. Van Dorn says the enemy admit a great loss among them from various causes, and are afraid the *Arkansas* may run down to New Orleans and play havoc among them there! Four gunboats are disabled, two sunk, and several others require expensive repairs. More anon.”

## CHAPTER XV.

Movements in Virginia and Preparation for the Fall Campaign—Pope, and the New Federal Army on the Rappahannock—Combinations of the Enemy developing by M'Clellan on our Right and Pope on the Left—Preparations and Dispositions of General Lee—Jackson is sent in the Van—What he does, and the Manner of doing it—He breaks the Advance Corps of his old Friend Banks—Battle of Cedar Mountain.

DESPITE the manœuvring of M'Clellan's forces south of the James River, and the threatened advance of Burnside from Suffolk and Norfolk, as if to form a junction and co-operate with him, the true state of the case was soon perceived by our corps of observation at Petersburg. Either indecision prevailed in the councils of the two generals, or all their movements near the seaboard were intended to hold us in check upon the James, while the large forces of Pope, on the Rappahannock and Rapidan, should obtain eligible positions, and perhaps advance so far as to be beyond our power to arrest them. It is possible that conflicting opinions existed between M'Clellan and Burnside, as was also known to be the case between the first-named and Pope. Burnside was ambitious—he was considered “a successful man,” from his capture of Roanoke Island,

and "full of promise;" M'Clellan had yet to win his spurs, and was now bullied by a brutal press for being unsuccessful. Burnside was politically allied to the Government; M'Clellan was not. Burnside was desirous of superseding M'Clellan in command of the "Grand Army," or what remained of it, while the latter was actuated by pure military feeling, and perhaps scarcely cared *who* commanded, if only success could be ensured. Thus, although it seemed probable at one time that a junction of their forces might ensue, M'Clellan's desires were thwarted, and Burnside was ordered round to reinforce Pope.

Finding that the expected reinforcement of Burnside was hopeless, M'Clellan withdrew his troops from the south side, and quietly prepared to leave the peninsula, which he now considered untenable. But before this final movement of the much-abused M'Clellan took place, General Lee perceived the scene of action was rapidly changing from the James to the Rappahannock, and that every available man at the north was being despatched with all haste to Pope. Banks, with a strong corps of New England troops, was stationed within a short distance of Culpepper Court-house, while strong detachments of cavalry and artillery had penetrated even so far southward as Gordonsville, but did not retain possession of that all-important point. They were merely feeling the way to its ultimate occupation. This was perfectly known to us, and the value of Gordonsville fully appreciated; for the only two routes to Richmond and the south united there, and, if once strongly garrisoned by the enemy, they would circum-

scribe all our operations, and cause the fall of Richmond without the absolute necessity of losing a man.

Secrecy has been the characteristic of all our movements; civilians are seldom allowed admission to our camps under any pretence; strong guards always encircle our lines, so that it is almost an impossibility to gain entrance. Thus, until the latest moment, none know the destination of troops, or the object in view, and even then, brigadiers are frequently no better informed than the humblest patriot in the ranks. If this is true of movements generally, it is peculiarly so in regard to the rapid marches of "Stonewall;" for a person might as reasonably "whistle jigs to a milestone" as attempt to glean information from the sharp-eyed, tart, sarcastic, crabbed-spoken Jackson. When his corps received orders to move, some imagined merely "a change of camps," or some such indifferent movement; yet when Richmond was left far to the south, and the column proceeded rapidly in a north-western direction, many old campaigners began to whistle ominously, and with a mysterious wink in the direction of the Shenandoah Valley, would sarcastically observe, "Lee's short of rations again! Jackson's detailed to go to the commissary!" in allusion to the immense supplies more than once captured by Jackson from the unfortunate Banks.

While our columns were toiling along the dusty roads, in a westward course, cavalry had been pushed ahead several days before, and were scouring the country in all directions south-west, driving small detachments of the enemy before them. No action or

combat of importance, however, had occurred save in the neighbourhood of Gordonsville, where a sharp cavalry encounter took place, with loss on both sides; yet the enemy rapidly fell back towards the Rapidan, and seemed disinclined to operate in the fine open country south of it. This was generalship. They knew not what force was approaching; by crossing the stream and destroying the bridges, a deep unfordable river was left in our front, which would occasion much delay; and as Culpepper was as a pivot-point by which the enemy could keep open the communication with their main army under Pope, approaching east by north; with Miles advancing from the west through the Valley with a heavy force, and with Washington nearly due north; Banks had massed his troops in a wooded plain near Cedar Mountain. Pope was not more than thirty miles to his left, with large masses advancing; while Miles, with 14,000 of all arms, was midway up the Valley, distant some forty or more miles to his right. The passage of the Rapidan, it was well known, would be hotly disputed, and particularly at the railroad bridge, for all the best roads to Culpepper cross and recross in the neighbourhood. When therefore our advance appeared on the south bank, fierce and heavy cannonading ensued, which lasted several hours, and was so obstinately maintained on our part as to attract the attention of Banks himself, inland and farther up the stream.

It was confidently expected we should cross at this point, but Jackson had made other arrangements, and unexpectedly crossed over much higher up, north-

westward, without the loss of a man. Our movements were evidently too rapid for Banks; indeed no possible despatch could save him, for if we were so inclined it was in our power to force a general engagement before any of the other divisions could arrive to his succour.

Once across the river, our order of march was changed; so that at any given moment the columns could deploy and not be subjected to confusion or surprise. With strong detachments of cavalry to the front, fanned out in skirmishing order, the enemy's movements were closely watched; light-armed, well-tried infantry followed at intervals, supported by light and active batteries, and, last of all, the main army which, in separate columns, pushed along roads and through the fields with elastic step, expecting every moment to be thrown into line.

While standing on a hill which overlooks the railroad bridge, the panorama of this beautiful grass country was presented to my view in a charming prospect. At my feet ran the Rapidan, flowing north-eastwardly, and debouching in the Rappahannock many miles away. All the landscape, north and east, was an undulating plain, plentifully timbered at intervals, while to the north-west and west rose parallel chains of hills and mountains, which, farther inland, enclose the beautiful Valley of the Shenandoah. In the gorgeous sunset of an Indian summer, with its varied tints of blue, gold, purple, and orange, the face of the country was one indescribable vista of sunlight and shade. In the distance various streams pursued their devious course, now lost in the forest, now sparkling in the open,—



only the pen or pencil of one inspired could give the faintest conception of this verdant, fruitful, and delightful region. Far away in the distance, white and red brick houses dotted the undulating farms; yet not a sign of life was discernible, no flocks, no cattle, no horses; the country was deserted,—the young in the army, the old ruthlessly driven from their homesteads.

When the sun was sinking, distant reports of musketry, far in advance, informed us that our vanguard were already skirmishing with the enemy, and driving in their outposts. Most of the firing seemed to be in the direction of Cedar Run, or Cedar Mountain, about seven miles from Culpepper, where the enemy were drawn up in order of battle, with an effective strength of more than 30,000 men, well supplied with artillery. The day was too far advanced for an engagement, and as their precise position could not be ascertained, Jackson was busily engaged along our lines, making every disposition for the morrow.

From dusty and weary scouts who arrived during night, we ascertained something regarding the true position of Banks's army. A few of these adventurous spirits had been prowling about the enemy's encampments in different parts of the country, and had discovered the following facts:—One of the enemy's army corps, under Sigel, was on their right among the hills at Sperryville, watching the roads and all direct communication with their rear at Mount Washington, Warrenton, and Manassas junction; a heavy force was stationed on Pope's left, at or near Waterloo on the

Rappahannock, while somewhat to the rear of Banks and Pope was M'Dowell's corps. It was concluded with reason that these various bodies would be unable to appear upon the field to assist Banks, should Jackson force him to engage on the following day (Saturday, August 9th).

During the night pickets, in our extreme front, were popping away at each other occasionally, and early in the morning our advance was resumed, cautiously and slowly. As the country was admirably adapted for concealment, our strength and position were never truly ascertained by the enemy's cavalry outposts, so that although our cavalry on the right were enjoying a merry time with those of Pope, our artillery gradually approached Cedar Mountain, and took up a strong position on the north side of it, unknown to the enemy. As this mountain-side commanded the sloping corn-fields and woods, stretching away at its base and sweeping the Federal advance, Jackson ordered to advance large bodies of skirmishers in order to draw the enemy forward.

Desultory picket-firing occupied most of the morning; and when noon had passed, many imagined that old "Stonewall" would defer an attack till the morrow; but those who had served with him, knowing well his mode of warfare, laughed at the idea. "Jackson is too wise to defer an engagement," said they; "and is fully aware that, by to-morrow, Sigel and others will be up within supporting distance and may overwhelm him. Besides, when our general commences late in the day, he can soon beat his enemy if both are equal in force;

but if he gets badly handled, he can still fight on until dark, and if need be, receive reinforcements or retreat during night." Such in truth had been Jackson's method in many engagements; for, nearly always outnumbered, he had either vanquished the enemy before nightfall after a few hours' engagement, or had securely retreated after severely punishing them. So on this occasion, when skirmishing became more brisk during the afternoon, and our advance posts gradually fell back towards the mountain, it was evident that Banks was determined to push us hard, and begin the engagement. This exactly suited Jackson, who had posted a heavy force of artillery on the hill-side, which at a given signal would open upon the enemy's flanks and finish the work.

It was now about five o'clock in the evening, the infantry fire had become more regular and sustained; regiments could be plainly seen advancing or retreating through the fields, but what precise order of battle was maintained upon our side could not be well ascertained on account of the broken character of the country. Clearly, Banks was ignorant of the existence of a flanking force ready to assail him from the hill, or he would not have advanced his infantry so close under it. His immediate object was to capture or displace some few pieces of artillery which, posted in the edge of a wood, caused much destruction among his advancing columns, which pieces also he foolishly imagined were unsupported. The infantry, thus far, had been hotly engaged on both sides, and it rather appeared as if ours were falling back. But this was a *ruse*.

Gathering together several brigades in which he had

most confidence, Banks ordered them to charge the guns before mentioned, and Crawford's brigade gallantly rushed forward in fulfilment of the order. Our gunners seeing the intended movement slackened fire, and reserved their strength until the proper moment; while several regiments of infantry, in support, cocked their rifles and lay on their faces concealed in the timber. As soon as the attacking column had emerged into open ground and deployed, advancing with shouts to the charge, grape, canister, and shell assailed them from several pieces, and broke them in a moment.

Banks was angry, and determined to force our position. Other brigades were quickly brought to the front and advanced over the dead bodies of their comrades, our gunners watching their approach, and at the right moment discharging their pieces with such accuracy that the attacking force seemed literally to melt away. Then our infantry suddenly rose from their ambush, and giving a withering volley at short distance, yelled and charged. Broken and demoralized as they undoubtedly were after this short but bloody engagement, it required but little more effort to rout the enemy's right wing. This was accomplished, by suddenly throwing forward our left, which threw the enemy into such confusion that one whole brigade, under General Prince, was reduced to a crowd of fugitives, running they knew not whither.

The attack of Banks had evidently failed, his centre and left were irreparably broken; while, to add to his confusion and dismay, our cannon on the hill-side, immediately commanding the field, opened rapidly upon

his broken forces, as they retreated in the wildest confusion from the scene. The advance was now taken up, and we drove the remnants of their army before us a considerable distance; but they retired so rapidly that it was impossible to overtake them. From causes, then unknown to me, we were suddenly halted, and took up positions originally occupied when the action opened two hours before. Finding us disinclined to pursue, Banks halted his men also, not far from the battle-field, and the smoke of their camp-fires was soon seen ascending over the trees.

While our weary soldiers were seeking rest after this brief but bloody battle, parties of horsemen moved from point to point, apparently to guard against any attempt on the part of the enemy to occupy the battle-field and despoil it of our valuable booty. This was our first surmise; but when it was ascertained that squadrons of Stuart's cavalry were also in motion, it was certain that some dashing achievement was in contemplation. It was like watching a succession of scenes on the stage. As the evening grew dark a party of horsemen appeared on the field as if to take notes; several of them dismounted, and appeared to be conversing angrily and gesticulating wildly, when suddenly a party of our men dashed from the thicket and madly spurred towards them. The enemy were annoyed, but evidently were not to be surprised, for, the distance being considerable, they hastily remounted and galloped off. Our troopers boldly plunged forward after them, and frequent shots were heard in the direction they had taken. After some time our men returned with a few prisoners, who informed us

that the Federal horsemen pursued were none other than General Pope and other officers of distinction, who, it seems, had the impudence to ride upon the ground in order to make it appear that the field was theirs !

Every one thought it a pity that Pope had not been captured ; our men heartily hated him for his ruthless cruelty\* to the inhabitants of the country, and his extraordinary amount of vanity and bombast. It was ascertained from these prisoners, also, that General

\* I think it unnecessary to dwell at length upon the brutality practised by Pope's troops upon the poor people of Virginia, but annex one instance as an example of their ruffianism and cowardice. The facts are derived from a private and confidential letter :—

“Federal atrocities in Virginia far outstrip all tales of fiction. Rape, arson, and theft, seem to be the constant attendants of an army professing to fight for the Union. A recital of the horrible murders that mark its bloody attack, one might suppose, would appal the doomed of Hades. Mrs. Fitzhugh, of Ravensworth—mother of the late Andrew Fitzhugh of the Navy—a lady of distinguished position, and one singularly embodying the graces and virtues of her sex, was brutally murdered in front of her house. Ravensworth, the family-seat of the Fitzhughs, you know, is one of the oldest estates in Virginia : it has been in the family since the reign of Charles II., from whom it was received as a grant, and has ever been noted as a place where a profuse hospitality was dispensed by as gentle and refined a people as live.

“The old lady, who was over eighty years of age, infirm and blind, leaning on the arm of her maid, was taking a little exercise in front of her mansion, when the girl suddenly cried out, ‘Oh, mistress, there come the Yankees!’ and in terror ran to the house. Mrs. Fitzhugh called out to her, ‘Don’t leave me alone with these vile Yankees!’ when one of them approached, and, with the butt of his gun, killed her ! Shortly after, two of her daughters, who had been visiting a neighbour, returned. One of them was seized and sent to Washington a prisoner—the other, so appalled at seeing her mother weltering in blood, became speechless ! The latter was left by the soldiers, who, on retiring, laughingly remarked, ‘Well, you can now bury the old hag—God b—t her!’” Instances like this could be multiplied, but their recital is too revolting. Indeed none would ever credit the atrocities of Pope’s army were they not upon the spot and eye-witness to them.

M'Dowell's forces had arrived, and that Sigel was rapidly approaching, so that by the morrow there would be two full corps before us, irrespective of Banks, who was still in front. It was well, therefore, that Jackson had not pushed forward too far or it must have precipitated an engagement on the morrow, in which he could not reasonably have expected to be successful. The commands of M'Dowell, Sigel, and Banks, amounted originally to 60,000 men, with a heavy force of artillery; while the most that Jackson could muster numbered from 20,000 to 25,000. Posted as we were, our position could have made a strong defence, if attacked in force by Pope on the morrow; but of this there were no indications.

Perceiving that his old friend Banks was unwilling to leave the vicinity of the battle-field, and positive that he would, as usual, claim it as his own, Jackson determined to put the disputed question beyond all doubt by forcing him, in a rough sort of way, to change his camps at an inconvenient and uncomfortable time. About midnight, therefore, while the beaten and prostrate enemy were fast asleep round their smouldering camp-fires, our artillery on the hill-side suddenly opened, and, with a deafening roar, threw shot and shell among them with great rapidity and precision. In truth, it was a pretty sight to see this dark hill-side, in bold relief against a pale blue sky, suddenly illuminated by a semi-circular sheet of flame, hurling death and destruction upon the numberless flickering camp fires that dotted the plain. It was sad, at the same time, to reflect upon the fate of men thus aroused from sleep to be hurried

into eternity. Such, however, are the stern necessities of war.

The noise and confusion among the awakened slumberers were indescribable, and pickets at the outposts informed us that they could distinctly hear field-officers shouting and galloping about in the darkness, vainly endeavouring to rally their commands. Waggons and guns, infantry and cavalry, were suddenly put in motion, and the receding noise did not subside for several hours. The loss to the enemy by this unexpected cannonade must have been great, yet, whatever it might have been, their generals never openly confessed to it. All that we could subsequently gather amounted to this—that large masses of men were so panic-stricken, that, with or without officers, they rushed to the rear and did not stop running until they reached Culpepper.

While all had reason enough to rejoice in the signal discomfiture of a foe who had been laying waste the land with fire and sword, many mourned the untimely end of Brigadier-general Winder, who had fallen during the day while gallantly leading his command into action upon the enemy's flank. The event was particularly memorable; and the more to be lamented from the fact, that it occurred while extricating the original "Stonewall brigade" from an awkward position to which it had been forced by the superior numbers of the enemy. Our men, however, had amply revenged his fall. General Prince, together with 30 commissioned officers, and upwards of 300 other prisoners, had been marched to the rear and sent to Richmond. The officers, indeed, were handcuffed and treated in the exact manner prescribed



for the rebels by Pope and his inhuman subordinates, who had been ruling with a rod of iron among a peaceable and inoffensive rural population. The number of arms found upon the field I never ascertained, but knew that the booty was considerable.

All expected that hostilities would recommence on the morrow, but from ignorance of our true position and strength Pope deferred all operations for that day. The enemy, however, were so anxious that the field should be regarded as their own, that when our burying parties were set to work they made a pretence of performing the same duty. They did not, however, confine themselves to the removal of the dead, but began to gather up the scattered arms, leaving the dead to our charge. Perceiving this, our artillery opened with such effect as to completely disperse them. Next day, however, Jackson sent forward a flag of truce, giving Banks permission to bury his dead, which was readily accepted; provision was of course taken to prevent the Yankees from prying too closely into our position and number. During the truce many officers of both armies met and conversed upon the field, and all seemed animated with the best of feeling. General Stuart was among the first to mount his horse to trot over the field; and while engaged in conversation, up rode his old companion in arms, Brigadier-general Hartszuff of the Federal cavalry, and politely saluting him, jocularly remarked, "Hallo! Stuart, my boy, how goes it? who'd a thought of such changes within so short a time? I was over you once, you know; now you're a full major-general, and I but a simple brigadier."

It cannot be denied that much bravery had been displayed by both armies in this brief encounter, and the brigades led forward against our batteries behaved wonderfully well. This did not surprise us when we learned that they were for the most part composed of New-York and Pennsylvania troops. Many of our own officers, indeed, had shown unexampled pluck and endurance; one instance of which particularly struck me. A major in command of his regiment (the colonel being disabled) had led it into a rather "hot" place and was obliged to retire, with part of his nose shot off, his left arm shot through and through, the toe of his boot shot away, and he had a flesh wound in his thigh. Having had his nose bandaged and his arm put in a sling, while the regiment was re-forming, he mounted his horse again and shouted out, "Come, on boys! forward! we'll pay 'em off for that last trick of theirs;" and pushed forward into battle again. I was also informed of a brave colonel, who being shot had fallen from his horse and injured himself much internally. His sole thought, however, was of his regiment, and though unable to ride, begged two men on foot to support him in the rear, so that he might superintend the movements of his men, just as the enemy were in full flight from the field.

Jackson's inactivity surprised all who knew him. None could imagine why he remained so long before a powerful enemy, and made no movements of any kind. It seemed, however, that he was waiting for some demonstration from the foe, and this not being vouchsafed, he was content to fall back again at his leisure

over the Rapidan, and there await the main army, which all knew was now rapidly marching from Richmond to co-operate with him. M'Clellan, we were informed, had effected his escape from Harrison's Landing, and was doubtless transporting his troops to Washington. It was possibly Lee's plan to overwhelm Pope and his "Army of Virginia" ere the remains of M'Clellan's "Army of the Potomac" could come to his assistance. This, however, was only the gossiping surmise of subordinate officers, for generals of division never opened their lips, nor even deigned to smile. It seemed to be the ambition of those mysterious individuals, now in particular, to exhibit a cold and reserved demeanour; to be active, and at the same time solemn in their deportment.

## CHAPTER XVI.

August 12th to 31st.—Pope, still in foree, watches Jackson on the Rapidan—The rapid Concentration of Confederate Forces there—Retreat of Pope to the Rappahannock, who establishes his Headquarters at Catlett's Station—Stuart makes an effort to capture that General, but arriving too late, seizes all his Wearing Apparel, Books, Papers, Plans, private and official Correspondence—Successful Flank Movement of Jackson round Pope's Right and Rear—He captures and destroys immense Stores at Manassas Junction, and disperses a Brigade sent from Alexandria to protect them—Sudden Retreat of Pope's Army towards Manassas—Engages Jackson with superior Forces, but without Results—Advance of Longstreet through Thoroughfare Gap, who soundly thrashes General Reno, stationed there to dispute the Passage—Longstreet forms a Junction with Jackson on the latter's Right—Arrival of General Lee—Heavy Reinforcements pour into Pope's Army—Second Battle of Manassas—Rout of the Enemy—Scenes on the Battle-field.

WE had not remained many days south of the Rapidan before we received large reinforcements, and the activity of couriers and quartermasters betokened an early movement. Many of our scouts had been out several days, but we could glean little from them except that Pope was still in front, and that firing was of daily occurrence across the river. On the 16th we learned that a change of position had taken place among the enemy, and that Sigel's corps was acting in our immediate front: next day it was ascertained that their whole army was moving, but very slowly.

Although opposed by powerful artillery, a part of our infantry crossed the river and took up the pursuit; Stuart's cavalry and flying artillery, as usual, being the first to exchange shots with Sigel's rear-guard, causing it much damage. From the 18th to the 20th heavy firing was maintained almost without intermission. Yet so well did Sigel handle his men, that they were able to cross the Rappahannock on the 20th, almost without loss. Not only so, but they defied our attempts to cross in pursuit; indeed such was the strength of their artillery it would have been madness to hazard such an undertaking. Demonstrations were made at various fords, but as the river was broad, and we had no pontoons, it was easy for Pope to hold us in check.

Detachments of cavalry, however, passed the river daily, and made spirited dashes among the enemy, frequently capturing both prisoners and stores. On one occasion Stuart personally led a few squadrons, and making a sudden rush upon Pope's head-quarters (situated at Catlett's Railway Station), nearly succeeded in capturing that pompous commander, who was warned of his danger by some traitor, and barely escaped for the second time. Four companies of rifles were stationed near the house, but at the first volley from our men they ran to the woods, leaving the house and all its treasures an easy prey. The cavalry were much incensed at losing Pope; and, dividing into small parties, galloped down every road with the hope of overtaking him, while others remained behind to secure the spoil.

Among the articles found by our troopers were

Pope's public and private papers, including plans, maps, estimates, and returns of forces, promises of reinforcements with statements of their strength, the possible time and place of junction, and the amount of stores at various depôts. Much clothing was found, including new full-dress suits for General Pope and his staff, also a quantity of private baggage, wines, and liquors. Doubtless it was dangerous work for those gallant troopers to penetrate so far within the enemy's lines, yet such was the antipathy and disgust felt by all for the vain-glorious and silly man commanding the enemy, that they would willingly have undertaken any enterprise which promised his capture.

While General Lee was making the demonstrations to which I have alluded at various points of the river, Jackson's forces, some 25,000 strong, left the main body on the 25th and proceeded towards the head-waters of the Rappahannock. As usual, he was unencumbered with baggage, or other impediments to a rapid march through the mountains, save a sufficient quantity of spare ammunition, and the necessary guns. Passing through the delightful region of Mount Washington, he pushed forward rapidly towards Salem, and turning the head of his column proceeded eastward parallel with the Manassas Gap railroad, until he reached the village of Gainsville. All this section of country was minutely known to every soldier in his command, and when the head of the column was filed to the right at Salem, no one doubted but that the true object of the expedition was to get in the rear of Pope's army, and destroy his communications and stores. Yet it must be confessed

that many complained of the supposed imprudence, if not madness, of the adventure. "Look facts fully in the face," said one; "here we are marching in the rear of an enemy more powerful than ourselves, far from all supports, liable to be broken up by superior numbers from Washington on the one hand, or to be literally annihilated should Pope face about and co-operate."

"'Tis just like him," said another; "no one can imagine what he's about; it was always so in the Valley and elsewhere—plenty of marching and fighting, and mighty little to eat, except what we chanced to capture."

"As to rations," said a third, "I know not what we shall do; we are on half allowance now, and to-morrow we shall have to fast and fight as usual. I heard that the Commissary General spoke to Jackson upon this point, but he simply answered, 'Don't trouble yourself; the enemy have a superabundance—their depôts are not far in advance!'"

That this was possibly true, all would admit; yet the more prudent looked upon the expedition as "rash," while they stoically observed, "If Jackson isn't afraid of *his* carcase, surely *we* need not be so particular!" The event justified their confidence, for upon the arrival of our troopers at Bristow, the first railroad station connecting with Pope's rear, large quantities of stores were discovered. The guards at the station decamped expeditiously upon the first appearance of our advance squadron, and, running towards Manassas, spread the alarm. The commandant of that post could not or would not believe the story; he imagined it to be

simply a small marauding party approaching, yet telegraphed the rumour to Pope and to the commandant of Alexandria.

The station-master at Manassas was very much mistaken, for our forces suddenly surrounding the Junction, captured everything without a blow. A brigade, we were informed, was approaching from Alexandria, but it was surprised by an ambush and dispersed, the commander being killed. The amount of stores that here fell into our hands was astonishing. Among the more important items were nine cannons; seven trains heavily laden with stores; ten first-class locomotives; 50,000 pounds of bacon; 1,000 barrels of beef; 2,000 barrels of pork; 5,000 barrels of superfine flour; vast quantities of hay, oats, and corn; 30,000 ready-made loaves; and an immense amount of hard bread, ammunition, &c. The telegraph-office was found intact, and the advance had not been many minutes at the station ere the operator was compelled to transmit a message to Alexandria, calling for an immediate supply of artillery and waggon harness, together with many other things of which we stood greatly in need. Thanks to the business-like despatch of those at Alexandria, a train soon appeared bringing the supplies; the distance was not great, and to ensure its safety, no sooner had it crossed Bull Run Bridge than the rails were torn up, so that it was impossible to return again, even had the engineer discovered the trick. Of eatables and drinkables there was no end; clothes, arms, military and sutler's stores, powder, shot, shell, cartridges—everything, in fine, was found here



which a needy, ragged, hungry, and travel-stained army might desire, either as necessities or superfluities. In truth, our hungry troops had a perfect feast, and what could not be of use was immediately destroyed. Many hours had not elapsed since our arrival ere the station, locomotives, out-houses, store-houses, and superfluous stores were in a blaze, sending forth vast columns of smoke, which must have been discernible over an area of many miles.

But this sort of thing could not be done with impunity. When couriers, hot and dusty, galloped up to head-quarters at the Junction, and reported firing in the direction of Bristow, it was evident that the truth had now become fully known to Pope, and that, having hurriedly broken up encampments around Warrenton, he was swooping down upon us with his whole force! This news was matter for serious consideration; and many said, "Suppose they drop upon us on the other side from Alexandria? if so, we are gone chickens, and old 'Stonewall' is played out!"

Jackson, however, had not been neglectful of chance combinations when revolving his plan, and knew upon what amount of co-operation he could himself rely. Yet upon the first news of Pope's advance, he drew his corps together, and did not seem to heed the heavy skirmishing and occasional cannonading going on with his rear-guard and the enemy's advance. Although fully aware of the immense odds approaching against him, he seemed determined to hold them in check, and was bold enough to place his corps in a naturally strong position which was parallel with the enemy's line of

retreat along the roads to Centreville, his right being stretched in the direction of Thoroughfare Gap to keep open communication with the main army, which we surmised was not more than two marches behind.

Meantime, facts became known which made those in the secret look gloomy enough on the evening of the 27th. An inevitable fight on the morrow began to be mysteriously spoken of around the camp-fires. The enemy were massing in our front. "If we are not soundly whipped," said one, "it is a mercy of Providence." "True," said another, "we are over-matched, yet our position is a strong one, and if there was any positive prospect of being thrashed, Jackson is the last man in the world to be caught in such a trap." "Yet 'trap' it seems to be," observed one, very emphatically; "we are outnumbered three to one in front: reports have come in of troops on the move from Alexandria and Washington." "Yes, but then our army is advancing from Thoroughfare Gap." "Are they? not at all! the Federals are strongly posted there, and hold it with many cannon!" This announcement elicited a long whistle from many, while others buried their chagrin in cups of coffee and smoked in silence. "Who told you?" one ventured to ask. "Wilkinson; he was sent off with orders, and could not get through—an entire division holds the place!" "Well, say no more about it," said a fat old major of foot; "anything for a change. I'd rather fight any time than be eternally marching; I suppose Jackson knows more about these things than we do—at all events, he puts a bold face upon matters, and instead of running away as a *scarey*

general would, he plants himself firmly along their line of march and defies them! 'Tis evidently a fight or a foot-race with somebody, so throw a few sticks on the fire, Cap., and let's take a nap—some of us may be hit or cut before to-morrow evening!"

Word was brought during the night that the enemy were moving across our front, but massing on our right; so that when picket-firing began at dawn in the latter direction, the enemy's plans were very clearly developed—they desired to cut us off from communication with troops rumoured to be marching to our relief. Ambrose Hill, however, who was said to be in command of our right, handled his men with more than usual ability, and prevented this design being executed. Prisoners captured informed us of the commands they severally belonged to; from whom it appeared that Heinzeleman was moving against our left under Ewell near Centreville; Sigel was operating against the centre under Jackson; and Porter, with his regulars and powerful artillery, was opposed to Hill, M'Dowell being in reserve. Banks was not mentioned, and his position was unknown. This news confirmed our former suspicions that M'Clellan was reinforcing Pope as rapidly as possible, his various corps being despatched from Alexandria as speedily as they arrived there!

Firing now became regular with the infantry, and booming of cannon resounded among the hills with a long rolling sound like the echo of thunder. Light lines of smoke ascending over the landscape, and the long crackling sound of rifles as regiments delivered

volleys, made the whole scene exciting and sublime. Long black lines of men advancing in columns, or wheeling when deployed, moving in all directions across the light green landscape, the explosion of shell among them causing death and disorder; the hurried motion of field officers, and furious galloping of orderlies and couriers; the meeting of regiments, their mutual volleys, and advance or retreat, with active batteries rushing here and there, unlimbering and firing, or limbering and hurriedly retiring—these were the constant sights presented by the enemy and ourselves in the vain endeavours of the former to turn our flanks. Loud above the general din, was heard the roar of the regular cannonade maintained by both sides, as shell screamed through the air on their mission of death, and, tearing through the trees, exploded with an awful crash.

Hour after hour was this fearful and unequal contest continued. Again and again would the enemy pause and re-form: attack succeeded attack, and charge followed upon charge. Each time the foe seemed to throw himself upon us with redoubled fury, each time to be baffled, dispirited, and broken, until it seemed impossible that even Jackson himself could withstand the repeated shocks. The greatest efforts of the enemy seemed to be concentrated against our right, under the immediate command of Jackson, as if it were the desire of Pope to crush or isolate him before the possible arrival of Longstreet and Lee. Whatever the object in view, Pope signally failed in turning the right, and although we slowly and cautiously gave ground, and punished his ill-timed advances with immense slaughter,

night was gradually approaching, and couriers from Longstreet brought the joyful news that he had successfully beaten the enemy at Thoroughfare Gap,\* and would form a junction with us in a few hours.

Although still hard pressed by the heavy forces of the enemy, and obliged to give ground from physical weakness alone, this news was passed from brigade to brigade, and from regiment to regiment, with such rapidity that, although completely exhausted, they rent the air with such an outburst of enthusiasm as to drown almost the fearful din of battle. Until night did this unequal contest last; but although we were forced to fall back some distance, this was effected with so much order and precision, that the movement appeared like a grand review. When the sun sank upon the scene, all was over; the enemy did not dare to pursue. Longstreet's approach was perhaps known to them, and they were unwilling to encounter our combined forces without receiving reinforcements, or making proper dispositions for that eventuality.

The position assumed by Jackson at sunset was, if possible, stronger than that previously held. Feeling positive that no new attack was contemplated, and that Longstreet had formed on our right wing, our men stacked arms, pickets were thrown out in front, some few fires were lit, and our wearied men betook them-

---

\* This was subsequently verified. We learned from some of General Reno's forces after the second battle of Bull Run, that they were the troops entrusted with the defence of Thoroughfare Gap, but being hard pushed by the Confederates, had retired upon General Porter's corps, with which they had subsequently acted. Hooker was also with Pope.

selves to sleep. Having several friends acting under Longstreet, I rode over to his position, and after much annoyance at the challenges of numerous sentinels, posted in out-of-the-way places, and many mistakes in picking my way in the dark, at last found the regiments and the individuals I desired to see.

Chatting round the camp fire, of that day's events, I ascertained that the enemy might have made a stout resistance at Thoroughfare Gap, but fled at the first fire. Longstreet's forces had travelled rapidly towards us; for the firing being audible, they were naturally impatient to rush to our assistance. On approaching the Gap no enemy was visible, but as the 7th and 8th Georgia were pushing forward in advance, the enemy suddenly opened several field-pieces, and commenced to sweep the road. "Oh, they are there, are they?" said Longstreet, laughing. "Well, we'll soon dislodge them, boys," and immediately ordered up several pieces of artillery, which galloping forward opened upon the enemy so furiously and with such accuracy, as to shelter our infantry and clear the summit of the road. This was quickly accomplished, but our artillery were not content—they rushed up the rise and began to shell the foe, who hastily retreated into open grounds beyond. Their infantry then finding themselves unsupported, fell back in disorder.

The arrival of Longstreet was hailed with loud applause, not unmingled with regret that Lee was still absent, it being certain that hostilities would recommence on the morrow. In what direction the blow might fall was uncertain; but the best disposition was made to

meet it when our reinforcements took up a position which threatened the enemy's flank. Signal-rockets were continually ascending along the Federal front, and from the number of camp-fires, and the amount of noise within their lines, it was shrewdly conjectured that heavy forces were arriving and taking up positions during the night. The incessant passing and re-passing of pickets, in addition to other noises, effectually banished sleep. Exhausted, sick, hungry, and annoyed, I rolled about, until a sergeant slapped me upon the back, when I jumped to my feet, and proceeding to a cottage near by, found several secretaries hard at work, and was ordered off on business many miles to the rear.

Shaking myself together, so to speak, I rinsed my face and hands, watered my horse in a brook, and quickly saddled: strapped on a small bundle of fodder, in case of need, buttoned my old overcoat to the throat, lit my pipe, and slowly picked my way through long lines of recumbent troops, until I was far to the rear, journeying alone over a deserted country, without guide or compass, save the dark and rugged outline of distant mountains, or the bright constellations studding a light blue sky.

As I slowly trotted forward along the well-beaten road, I occasionally came upon some small party of fatigued and exhausted stragglers, who, to the number of four or half-a-dozen, had lit fires, and were for the most part asleep; yet, as soon as my horse's hoofs were heard approaching, some one of the group would jump to his feet and "halt" me. I did not wonder at the stragglers I thus met, for their marches had been

long and rapid, and were their numbers greater I could have excused it, for ill-fed, wretchedly clothed and shod as they generally were, they must have been made of steel to withstand the hardships and privations of the past few days. Even I, who was in the saddle on a march, was perfectly exhausted, and for humanity's sake would not force my poor horse to more than a trot, except necessity compelled it. Yet such was the pride of these poor weary fellows, that to my cheerful remarks they would always answer, "We didn't fall out o' ranks scared of the Yanks, lieutenant, but our feet are all in blisters and cut with hard marching,—we'll soon catch up with the boys to-morrow!"

As I progressed still farther on my journey, the large number of smouldering camp-fires dotted right and left of the main road, told me I had fallen in with whole brigades marching to the front; and the number of "halts" to which I was subjected by the guards, and the numerous questions put to me by half-sleepy and yawning "officers of the guard," were, to one in my position, vexatious in the extreme. Sometimes the cracking of whips and loud oaths of teamsters told me of waggon-trains fast in the ruts or mire; occasionally I passed a battery unable to move farther from the exhaustion of the animals, while artillerymen at the heads of sweating, snorting, and foaming horses, or at the wheels, greasing the axles, or pulling with ropes, evinced the anxiety which possessed all to be pushing to the front. Here and there camp utensils, blankets, and knapsacks, had been thrown upon the road side to lighten the waggons, more than one of which vehicles was upset by the road-



side, and the horses, tethered or hobbled, were enjoying themselves in the high grass. Quartermasters, commissaries, and waggon-masters would occasionally pass at a swinging gallop, searching for stray teams or superintending occasional mishaps, fretting and swearing as those important officials are often wont to do. All the roads were well watched, however, and occasional bonfires on the hills told me that the signal corps was wide awake, for occasionally their burning brands were rapidly at work, repeating or transmitting telegrams from point to point.

A few hours' ride brought me to my destination soon after sunrise, and having despatched my business, all I could do was to wait for further orders. My horse having been first cared for, I hung my saddle in a tree, near the door of a small cottage to which I had been directed, threw myself full length upon a bench, and was soon fast asleep.

I know not how long I had slept, but was awakened by voices at the door: "Lord a mercy, what a noise them cannons do make to be sure—they're fightin' agin at Manassas *I* know. Just listen!" said an old housewife. I started up and stepped to the door; the loud and regular discharge of ordnance fully told me that some part of our lines was being furiously attacked. The heavy "thuds" which occasionally caught the ear were undoubtedly from howitzers, while the sharp, ringing sounds which could be occasionally heard, indicated rifled ordnance. An action of some sort was certainly going on, and I felt uneasy at my own inactivity. "Don't be impatient, my boy," said an old officer; "you are as

much on duty here, as elsewhere—besides, I don't think it is a general action, for I understand Lee has not passed here many hours, and he would surely be on hand if aught of that kind was anticipated. They are making a devil of a smoke, though," continued the major as he mounted a hill close by to observe. "Here, take the glass and look for yourself—it doesn't seem to be much more than ten miles in a direct line."

I took the glass and distinctly observed light clouds of white smoke wafting over trees in the eastern landscape, but at that distance nothing definite could be made out. "Oh, don't trouble yourself," said the major; "I'm sure you're no field-marshal—Lee, Longstreet and Jackson can get along pretty well without you for a few hours. As to the boys, they can take care of themselves at any time—so let your horse alone, and sit down; I think I've got a few cigars and a drop of good Bourbon somewhere—There, drink away and smoke till you're tired—they cost me nothing, I got them from Dan Sickles' stores, which our boys captured at Savage Station." I tried the articles and found them to be good.

"Dan seems to be no bad judge of whisky and cigars, does he? but, Lord! how mad he must have been to lose all his plate, private papers, and fine clothes, at Savage's, eh?" and as the major's nose became redder at every additional glass, he took an extra bumper to raise steam, threw his heels upon the writing table, and launched forth into a very long-winded story of his personal prowess, until I began mentally to inquire "where he generally buried his dead."

Although in appearance very friendly to the major, I could not but loathe him in my heart, for he was one of a class of brigade and divisional quartermasters who were the greatest hypocrites and rogues left unhung. He seemed to be totally absorbed in self; his personal baggage was large and miscellaneous; beds, bedsteads, chairs, tables, a full and large equipment of mess furniture, washing apparatus, and I know not what besides; the traps of his clerks and assistants demanded far more transportation than was allowed even to two full companies of foot; upon a march it is pretty certain the poor privates could not find room for the stowage of a coffee-pot or frying-pan, while his own waggons had the finest horses, and were always in front. If any of the waggons required an additional horse or two to pull up a hill, he would always order them to be "lightened," so that many a poor lad's extra wearing apparel was thrown upon the roadside, together with pots and pans without number, and to all remonstrances he would gruffly answer, "Waggón-master, push ahead," not caring a jot if the whole regiment or brigade had not a single pot in which to cook their rations.

Like others of his stamp, the major found time to speculate in horses or mules, and as such things could not be done without "go-betweens," there were understrappers in his department, who realized hundreds of dollars per month, through such purchases. He would keep in hand for months at a time thousands, I might say, hundreds of thousands of dollars, which should have been paid away to the troops, and if spoken to he would answer, "Pay? oh, certainly, I'd have paid the men long

ago, but the pay-rolls were incorrect, and I had to return them to be re-written." Many of our brigade quartermasters, particularly if on detached service, were of this worthless character—in truth, many were an encumbrance to the army; and had fiery Longstreet or Jackson hung a few of them as Napoleon is said to have done on more than one occasion, the whole army would have been the better for it.

The firing towards Manassas continued throughout the day, but it was not till sunset that I received orders to return to the army. Glad enough. I had mounted and faced "homewards" again, I started towards Manassas at a rattling pace, feeling certain if Lee arrived there would be "lively times" in the morning. I had not proceeded many miles along my circuitous route, ere I fell in with cavalry patrols and pickets, who were extremely vigilant; and although custom has made me sharp-sighted at night, I confess they frequently halted me ere I had the slightest notion of being within many miles of their vicinity. To add to my misery and delay, I had not the "countersign," and was marched off to the nearest guard-post to account for myself.

"Can't help it, comrade," said the cavalry-man: "I believe your words, and think I have frequently seen you before; but orders are orders, you know, and we must obey." I was handed over to the next picket, and so on, until I reached the central picket station, where the captain commanding examined me rigorously, and upon presenting papers of identity, he politely gave me the countersign, saying: "It was well, perhaps, you fell

in with our men, for the road you were taking must have led you nearer the present lines of the enemy than you care about finding yourself, I know: the countersign I have given you is good among the outer pickets; when you reach the infantry be careful how you act, for they have another one, and are particularly wakeful to-night, and thick as flies!"

Acting upon this advice, I plunged forward boldly, and was in high spirits, singing right heartily, for our numerous encampments were visible for many miles around. "Halt! halt!" was the challenge suddenly given by half-a-dozen; and from their guns levelled at me, I saw there was no fun about them. "Who goes there?" "Officer without the countersign!" "Advance, officer!" and I did so very meekly, for could they have seen me even wink improperly, I should have been instantly riddled with half-a-dozen shots. I here went through the operation of being handed over from one to another, until fairly out of patience. The corporal of the guard would do no more than hand me to the sergeant, the latter to the lieutenant of the guard; the last to the officer of the night, and he to the officer of the day: so that, from being handed from one to another, it got rumoured abroad among some idle soldiers that I was a "spy," and soon there was a large crowd at my heels, bestowing upon me all manner of uncomplimentary epithets. The rumour spread among the regiment through which I was then passing; and while in the tent of the officer of the day making explanations, I heard one loquacious gentleman, who was peeping through a rent in the tent, exclaim: "The

captain's got him—he's a spy, and they've got the papers on him! I hope they'll detail me as one of the firing party; *won't* I let him have it good!"

After a few moments of explanation, I remounted again; and my sudden transformation into a good and true Southerner seemed to have caused infinite disgust to many, but particularly to the ragged gentleman who was so anxious to make one of the "firing party."\*

I had yet a long and weary journey before me, through miles of camps; and as I picked my way through long lines of stacked arms, glistening in the fire-light, I could not but smile at the stoical indifference evinced by nine-tenths of the men for the dreadful work in store for them on the morrow. Some were oiling the locks of their guns; others, in

---

\* The feverishness of our men regarding "spies" during these eventful days, was highly excited by the following incident:—While Longstreet's corps was hurrying forward to Jackson's relief on the 28th, several brigades in advance on different roads were observed to halt, thereby stopping all further progress of the corps. Very angry at this, Longstreet trotted to the front, and was informed that a courier had brought orders from General Lee to that effect! "From General Lee?" said he, his eyes glowing with rage. "Where is that courier?" he asked. "There he goes now, general, galloping down the road." "Keep your eyes on him, overtake him, and bring him here." This was soon accomplished. "By whose orders did you halt my brigade?" asked a brigadier. "As I have already told you—by General Lee's! I have orders for Longstreet, and must be off to the rear!" "Here is Longstreet," said that general, moving forward. "Where are your orders?" The spy was caught! He turned red and pale, his lip quivered—he was self-condemned. "Give this man ten minutes, and hang him! Let the columns push forward immediately." In fifteen minutes the spy was lifeless, hanging from a tree by the roadside; but before death, confessed that although a Virginian and a Confederate soldier, he had been in communication with the enemy over ten months, and was then acting for General Pope.

shirt-sleeves, were ramming with wipers to cleanse the barrels of their pieces. Hats, caps, coats, stockings, accoutrements, and the like, were suspended from branches overhead, while orderly serjeants' were busy with ammunition-boxes, issuing extra rounds. Some were asleep near the fire, others frying bacon or making coffee; while round such a fortunate youth were sure to be some half-dozen epicures shouting out, "I'll take the grounds after you!" "After you," said one. "Next after you," shouted another; so that it seemed the coffee-grounds had to do service half-a-dozen times round. I passed through several artillery camps,—the ringing or clanking of chains, and the disposition of harness for instant use, proved the instinct which all felt regarding the event of the next day.

All this I observed on the extreme wing of our army; but when I proceeded farther, I saw long lines of wounded being conveyed away, and afterwards counted hundreds of dead. There had been a desperate fight, I was told, principally in Longstreet's wing, and rumour said he had been obliged to give ground. I could learn nothing definite regarding the engagement; but the cavalry captain's remark to me, that "I was on the road to the enemy's lines," seemed to indicate that Longstreet had been obliged to fall back some distance. The fighting was represented to me as having been awful: the enemy had been reinforced by nearly all of M'Clellan's Peninsula force, and was suddenly hurled against our right. No loss, in cannon or general officers, was reported; but it was said that,

acting strictly on the defensive, we had inflicted terrible punishment upon them with our artillery as they advanced in masses against us. The position occupied by both was almost identical with the ground in the first Battle of Manassas, except that we were on the north and they on the south side of the Run.

Very little notice seems to have been taken of this engagement in official circles. I learned, however, that the true object of the Federal attack was to extricate their left somewhat, and to push their right into Centreville, so as to keep open communication with Washington and Alexandria for the receipt of reinforcements and supplies; of which they stood greatly in need, since Jackson's visit to the Junction on the 27th. Reconnoitring parties were sent out during the night, who reported that the enemy had drawn in their left wing considerably, thus shortening, but perhaps strengthening, their line. Be that as it may, preparations were busily going on among us to open the battle on the morrow; and the determination of all seemed to be to push Pope harder on this occasion than ever before, and to give him a clear unclouded view of men whose faces he pretended never to have seen.

Couriers, orderlies, and colonels were moving about all night; and although the army seemed to rest in peace, one-half the men were wide-awake, revolving the chances of the morrow and wishing the affair were over. Part of Longstreet's corps was on the move early in the morning, and seemed to be cautiously taking up positions nearer the enemy's left. As this movement was continued, sharp skirmishing occurred



in his immediate front, and soon after extended rapidly along the whole line. Nothing of moment occurred, however, between the two armies for many hours in the morning; indeed, it was past noon when the action really commenced.

The advance of our right seemed greatly to annoy the enemy's left, which it evidently outflanked, and they determined to open upon us suddenly, and with great fury, hoping to annihilate it before the arrival of reinforcements. Contrary to custom, therefore, the enemy did not cover their advance with skirmishers, but came forward in regular battle-line, and would have taken our sharpshooters by surprise; but the latter had been in service too long to be imposed upon by any such Yankee notion, and, instantly retreating, gave the alarm that the enemy were approaching in serried lines, one being within easy supporting distance behind the other. "So *they* are the attacking party, are they?" said an old brigadier as he sat upon his horse smoking a cigar: "Forward, boys! we also are advancing, so there must be music of some sort shortly."

He had proceeded but a few hundred yards through the fields and woods, when the enemy's approaching line was revealed by the glitter of their bayonets. A volley was fired and returned; then our men moved forward again, and continued this mode of proceeding throughout the engagement: but every time the enemy gave ground, our active batteries would gallop to the front and give them such a vigorous shelling, as completely broke the order of their retrograde movement. From such information as I could glean, while passing from

point to point, it appeared that our advance was almost in the form of two sides of a square, the enemy's left being the particular object of our main attack.

The general advance was a beautiful sight. As far as the eye could range, two parallel lines of glittering bayonets were flashing in the sun;—now the Federal lines halted suddenly, a gleam of sunlight told that their rifles had been brought to the “ready,” and a moment had not elapsed ere a long flash was seen, light curls of smoke arose, and the rattling echo of their volleys was carried on the wind. A yell arose, and was borne from wing to wing with the quickness of light, when quickly a rapid irregular fire was returned, and the clatter continued as fast as our men could load. Onward they went—now the long line could be observed passing through open fields, skirmishers in front popping away at the retiring foe. The line again would disappear in the woods. A brief pause would ensue, followed by the clatter of our artillery riding to the front, and the awful roar of the guns. Then, again, a shout, telling that our men had resumed the advance.

Cannonading was terrific along our whole front, but on the right FitzJohn Porter's and Longstreet's artillery literally shook the earth. Their left giving way, a sudden attack was made on their centre, commanded by M'Dowell and Sigel. The assault was neither long nor doubtful, for the enemy retired at the first volley, and such was their evident confusion, that it at one time seemed as if their whole army was giving way to panic; yet, through the exertions of Sigel, the gap in their centre was quickly filled up, and the fight

maintained there with obstinacy and generalship. An attempt made to turn our left signally failed. The flanking force was soon discovered approaching, and allowed to come within a reasonable distance, when a powerful artillery force opened at the head of the column, and literally smashed it. Thus, on the right and centre, our forces were rapidly dispossessing the enemy of his position, and no one doubted the issue of the conflict. Along the whole line, clouds of dust and smoke, the booming of artillery and rattle of small arms, told of the unflinching courage and pertinacity of our men: while long lines of ambulances and stretchers, proceeding to the rear, fully proved that although victory was evidently ours, we had dearly paid for it. Fiery Longstreet, with his impatient and gallant corps, was rapidly pushing our right, while shot and shell ploughed the ground in all directions around him. Lee in the centre, calm and collected, moved from point to point among his troops, smiling good-humouredly with the consciousness that he was gradually pressing hard on the masses of the foe; while old "Stonewall," as usual, was in a very tempest of shot and shell, and smoke and dust, holding on like grim death to his position on our left, and punishing the enemy frightfully with his well-disposed artillery. Thus, in truth, all our generals were hotly engaged, at different points of the line. The impetuous Ambrose Hill was with Ewell and others under Jackson, and had enough to do to keep time with the rapid movements of their chief. The satirical, stoical D. H. Hill was there, cold as ice, and firm as a rock. Evans, Stuart, M'Laws, Maxey Gregg,

Jenkins, Barksdale, Whiting, Archer, Pickett, Field, Walton, Pendleton and a host of other historical heroes, were in command to-day, and each seemed to rival the other in prudence and valour; while Hood and his Texans far outshone all their previous deeds by their present acts of daring.

Over all the field the battle was going favourably for us, and no complaint was uttered on any hand—all seemed to desire to get as close to Pope as possible, and to show their powder-blackened faces to him. I believe there was not a single man in the whole army but would have swum through rivers of blood to have caught that mendacious hero alive; not all the wealth of Peru would have been half so acceptable to our enraged men as the capture of that vain and pompous leader, whose rule in Virginia had been marked with such wanton waste of property, such tyranny over the inhabitants, and so many instances of petty revenge. Such a fortune, however, did not fall to our lot, for John Pope, the self-created hero, took great pains to keep from the front, and never allowed himself to ride within two miles of the actual battle. Several of the Federal generals, however, chiefly brigadiers, boldly rode to the front, and cheered on their men. Sickles and Meagher were singled out and disabled.\* Wherever I rode along our extended and ever-changing front, prisoners of all grades, cannon, flags, and other trophies were passing to the rear; while

---

\* Among hundreds of line officers who fell was Col. Fletcher Webster, 12th Massachusetts Volunteers, eldest and sole surviving son of the great American orator and statesman, Hon. Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts.

every patch of timber was converted into a temporary hospital, where surgeons in blood-stained garments were busily plying the knife. Moans, groans, and death-cries arose on every hand, mingling with the distant roar and rush of battle; while the wounded, both friend and foe, forgetful of all enmity, dragged themselves to the same spring to quench their thirst. Headless or limbless bodies were seen at every turn; stray shot and shell from the enemy ploughed up the ground, or exploded among the wounded; while riderless horses, foaming and frightened, rushed to and fro, in all directions, or limped and tottered till they fell. Still "Onward!" was the word from all. Ammunition wag-gons slowly followed the line of battle, while in wood and field, across creeks and brooks, the roar of battle continued, and long lines of smoke curling over tree tops were wafted away westward by the rising breeze of evening.

This was a terrible battle, truly—prisoners confessed that our artillery fire on their left and right had been truly appalling. From a comparison of names and positions we learned that, independent of Pope's own force, all, or nearly all, of M'Clellan's army had arrived in time to participate in the engagement, and that the severest fighting had been done by them. They had been force-marched, they said, to get up in time, and though exhausted were thrust into the most dangerous positions, and oftentimes left without supports. The loss among their field officers had been great, and whole brigades were so loth to engage, that they broke up on the instant of confronting us. M'Clellan's men, we

were told, were heartily sick of the war—all their hopes and ambition had been completely broken in the campaign before Richmond, and they possessed little heart to engage us again so soon, particularly under the leadership of such a “granny” as Pope. “In fact,” said an officer to me, “this Manassas No. 2 bids fair to rival No. 1,—the ground seems fatal to us—we have been led out by John Pope to-day for wholesale slaughter; unless M‘Clellan comes to its instant relief with some additional corps, you may rely upon it our retreat will turn into a perfect rout.”

Having orders to proceed from the centre to our right, I had to cross the Bull Run, and such a sight I never wish to witness again. The wounded and dying of both armies lined the banks in all manner of attitudes. Some in the endeavour to drink had tumbled in, and from weakness unable to extricate themselves, had been drowned: others in the water, clung to branches, and thus sustained themselves, but often let go their hold and disappeared. All the meadows were trodden down, and were brown, wet and bloody, hundreds of bodies had been ridden over and crushed by artillery or cavalry, so that the remains of poor humanity were scattered and crushed in the most revolting manner. This was no time to philosophize, however; the battle still went on, and as I followed the line pursued by Longstreet, carnage and sickening sights met me at every turn. Now I came upon a spot where artillery had been hotly contending—the trees around were broken, riddled, or blown down, caissons were upset, dead horses in scores lay scattered about, while the grass and

sand were purpled with blood. Fences were gone, houses knocked into splinters or undistinguishable heaps of brick—small arms, cannon, and long lines of dead were on every hand, and yet the fight continued in the direction of Centreville very warmly. The enemy were simply fighting to secure their retreat, so that at evening when the firing slackened, and we had driven them a great distance, I was glad to think the battle was drawing to a close for that day. It seemed to me, however, that the enemy's new position on Centreville heights was a formidable one, and I was not at all pleased to see indications of their camping or staying there.

Except a few occasional shot and shell, the battle was over—the enemy were driven from all their positions, and our whole army was completely exhausted with their labours of the past few days. Of the numbers lost by us I could not form an estimate; we had suffered severely, it is true, but the punishment inflicted on the enemy was really awful. Our captures in prisoners had been very considerable, and great numbers were paroled and sent forward to the enemy's lines in the Valley or to Harper's Ferry. Pope had been unmercifully thrashed by Lee in this memorable battle, and every Southerner rejoiced, but was heartily amazed that the immortal John had not shown his face during the day, where thousands were on the look-out for him.

Much ammunition and many stores fell into our hands. This was grateful news to the men, for we needed both very much, and our transportation trains

were inadequate to the duty of regularly supplying us. Jackson was vexed that so much of the enemy's baggage had escaped, and the battle had not been over many hours ere he was preparing to sally forth and get on their flanks, with a view to further captures ; for myself, I could not help thinking that Manassas was glory enough for one day, and felt heartily glad I was not one in his marching division. Truly, Jackson was the most restless leader the world ever saw, and he seemed to have very little consideration for the bones and sinews of his men, so that, when remonstrated with, he simply answered, "The men like it—we shall find plenty of provisions on the route, if the enemy have any."



## CHAPTER XVII.

The Battle-field—Capture of Prisoners—Confusion of the Enemy's Retreat to Centreville—Loss of Baggage—Bivouac on the Field—Conversation of Officers with Prisoners—Burnside and M'Clellan's Reinforcements—How their Destination was changed from Point to Point by the Rapidity of Lee's Movements—Retrospect—The strong Position of Centreville is turned by one of Jackson's fast Flank Movements—The Enemy fall back from Centreville in great Haste and Confusion—Heavy Skirmishing with the Enemy's Rearguard near Fairfax—Death of Generals Stevens and Kearney—Further Retreat of the Enemy, who enter their fortified Lines round Arlington Heights and Alexandria—Jackson crosses into Maryland—He is followed by several Confederate Divisions, which hold the Mountain Passes at Boonsboro'—Jackson suddenly moves from Frederick City.

I WAS so much fatigued when the engagement closed that I would fain have gathered a few sticks and bivouacked where sunset found me, but falling in with a cavalry party detailed to watch the enemy during night, we rode over a large part of the battle-field, and pickets being posted, the "reliefs" luckily found a few tents standing, left like thousands of other things in the hurry of retreat, and we camped there. Barrels of cracker bread, some excellent corned beef, and half a sack of ground coffee were also discovered in beating about through the timber, so that fires being lighted, we unslung our mess traps, and were soon engaged in

ravenously devouring our highly prized supper. The coffee proved a great luxury to the whole party, few of whom had tasted this beverage since the capture of stores before Richmond in June. Had the oldest and best of wines been offered in exchange, I doubt if any would have parted with their steaming cups of Rio.

We formed several groups round as many fires, lighted near the tents, and with the all-consoling pipe, soon found ourselves launching forth into the merits and ups and downs of Pope's eventful campaign. Some troopers of the party, however, had made a discovery of something stronger than coffee, and having found a violin among the deserted effects of the departed Yankees, were dancing to a lively tune. With long uncut beards, whiskers and monstaches, heavy riding-boots and sabres, and attired with Yankee light-blue overcoats, our troopers capered about with all the elegance of young bears. It was impossible to blame them for their gaiety: they had been fearfully overworked, and although sent out again on outpost duty, were sufficiently far from the front to attract attention. Our bivouac had evidently been a general quartermaster's camp: we found so many things belonging to such a department, as put the matter beyond doubt. In the largest of the tents were his desks, stools, tables, and bed—in others were provisions of various sorts, as if some commissary also had been in company, while much hay, straw, and corn, proved very acceptable to our half-starved animals. We could plainly discern the enemy's camp-fires on Centreville Heights, and rockets

were frequently bursting in the air, conveying intelligence from point to point. The greatest number of troops seemed to be stationed farther up the roads towards Fairfax, judging from the large luminous bodies of clouds hanging in that direction.

Except the snorting of horses, nothing was heard during the night,—the first relief fell in about midnight and trotted off in the darkness—the old guard returned and brought no news. How long I remained half dozing or sound asleep I know not, but as my boots became very hot from being near the fire, I awoke in a bad temper and found not less than half-a-dozen Federal prisoners sitting on logs round the fire, who were talking in subdued tones. They were infantry men,—two were officers, and at a short distance I could perceive one of our overcoated and heavy-heeled cavalry men standing guard with his carbine cocked.

The prisoners had been captured near the banks of Bull Run secreted in the bushes, and had surrendered without resistance. They were dusty, ragged, hungry, and haggard, or their looks very much belied them; so that finding I could not sleep, I sat up by the fire, lit my pipe and began conversing with the officer commanding our party, who was still awake. After a few hints, he understood me, and invited the officers to a drink of liquor, and laid our crackers and coffee before them, so that many minutes had not elapsed ere the whole Federal party were busily engaged cooking, and seemed very grateful for our considerate behaviour. “Men must eat, you know,” said the commandant, sucking his pipe, “whether friend or foe—pitch into

the grub, fellows," said he, "you'll have a long march to-morrow." Some of the men cooked for the two officers, who after eating, played with empty pipes—a hint which was quickly perceived. I gave them a little tobacco, and the privates being allotted a tent, bundled in among the straw, and were happier than if sleeping in the St. Nicholas Hotel. The commandant and myself were soon engaged in conversation with the two officers, whose eyes we kept from closing by giving occasional draughts of whisky, a process they did not seem averse to, for one of them, a red-nosed lieutenant, seemed such an adept in emptying a small half pint cup that I would wager he could account for a dozen at any time, and never even cough or wink. We did not try the experiment with him, however, but adroitly managed to keep the stone jar on our side of the fire, without wounding his sensitiveness.

"Ah, you always manage to out-manœuvre us," said one. "Had it not been for Cedar Run, this present disaster would not have befallen us. How so? That is very plain; for if Pope had been able to maintain his position south of the Rappahannock, all M'Clellan's and Burnside's forces would have reinforced him at Fredericksburg; instead of that our men were ordered to Aquia Creek. It was thought we could hold the north bank of the Rappahannock for some short time; but when Pope was forced back on Manassas by Jackson's flank movement, the point of debarkation was again changed to Alexandria—a considerable distance in our rear. Thus your General Lee seemed to understand the anxiety of Pope to be reinforced, and, by

rapid movements, prevented the mass of those troops arriving until too late."

"Well, those which *did* arrive did not do much, I think. Prisoners from M'Clellan's men say that the whole army was disaffected, and that general officers made no bones about calling Pope a fool publicly."

"True, those troops of M'Clellan which arrived on the 28th and 29th did not *do* much, as you say, but I can assure you they *suffered* much—yes, horribly—and more's the pity that such willing men should have been sent to wholesale slaughter under the orders of such a cabbage-head as Pope. Parts of Burnside's and Hunter's troops which had been long in the field, and had been hurried on to Pope, were expected to work wonders, but, upon the proof, broke into disorder. Besides, we had no regular supplies. Your generals had appropriated or destroyed the depôts at Manassas; the railroad to our rear also had been destroyed in part by your cavalry, so that, you may scarcely believe it, we have been living for the past week very irregularly and precariously, while, worse than all, our ammunition was scant, and there seemed to be no fixed arrangements for supplying us with anything from Alexandria or Washington. I am heartily sick of the business."

"Yes," chimed in Rednose, "I wish I was strolling up Broadway to-night,"—"into some bar-room" he might have added, for, from a sidelong glance cast at our precious stone-jar, he evidently wanted "a whet," sugar or no sugar.

In answer to inquiries, the first speaker continued: "I always heard that Cedar Run had cost Banks

upwards of 3,000 men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, and during the last three fights, I should judge we could not have lost less than 14,000 more.\* I did not hear that we had lost thirty pieces of artillery, but your statement is doubtless correct, for I know we must have suffered fearfully, judging from the hurry and confusion of retreat. Your pickets informed me, that all the roads are literally blocked up with waggons, caissons, and cannon. I do not doubt it, for it is no use disguising the fact that we were completely routed. Your attack upon our left was a fierce affair, and Porter suffered terribly. Had your assault upon our centre succeeded as well, we should never have reached Centreville alive. Sigel behaved like a hero there, and so did M'Dowell; had they not rushed into the wide gap with fresh troops and stubbornly defended it, our whole army would have been divided and slaughtered piecemeal.

“It is true, as you have been told, that we never had confidence in Pope; we all felt that he was perfectly bewildered during the week, galloping from this place to that, giving orders one minute and countermanding them another. We did as directed, however, and here

---

\* General Pope admitted unofficially that his losses during the 28th, 29th and 30th amounted to over 17,000 killed, wounded and prisoners, but the authorities at Washington contradicted the report, and said the total would not be more than 8,000, as many stragglers were returning to the ranks again. Pope certainly had better opportunities of knowing the truth than General Halleck, for when General Sumner and others joined him near Centreville with 20,000 men, Pope said they had arrived too late, and would barely fill up the loss sustained by him during the week. It will not be possible to know the whole truth till all is over, for the North always misrepresents matters.

we are, prisoners, but might have fallen into worse hands, judging from your hospitality and kindness." We explained that several thousand (6,000) prisoners had been captured during the past few days, and were paroled as far as convenience would permit, which news surprised them; but the bare idea of a parole, and the possible chance of strolling up Broadway ere many days, had a visible effect upon Mr. Rednose, who unceremoniously seized our jar, and helped himself to a very considerable suck therefrom.

As conversation continued, we ascertained from the Federal captain who had been speaking, that he was employed on the staff during the day, and had traversed the greater part of the field, so that his remarks were not all hearsay. He described the loss of the enemy as being truly considerable, and did not deny that their line officers had suffered much. Banks had not participated in the engagement, and it was generally supposed he had been cut off by our forces.\* The various brooks and streams were represented as quite discoloured, and contained many bodies of friend and foe,—temporary and other bridges were broken at different places, and cannons, waggons, and horses were not unfrequently seen partly submerged.

Nothing in the world could have induced me to travel over that blood-stained plain—one battle-field is much like another, and I had seen so many, that few things novel would have repaid me for the labour, had I been so inclined. Nothing but revolting, sickening

---

\* This was incorrect, for he joined Pope on the march from Centreville, but lost much of his baggage, as usual.

sights could be met with; and save the lights of burying parties, and ambulance trains slowly moving to and fro in all directions, little was there to tempt me from my couch of straw. What might transpire on the morrow none could imagine, but reports were confirmed that Jackson was busily engaged in provisioning his corps from captured stores, and no one doubted that he would soon be in motion. The probable object of his anticipated movement I have alluded to at the end of the preceding chapter.\*

---

\* A Southern gentleman thus writes of Jackson, whom about this period he saw for the first time :—"There you see self-command, perseverance, indomitable will, that seems neither to know nor think of any earthly obstacle, and all this without the least admixture of vanity, assumption, pride, foolhardiness, or anything of the disposition to exert its pretensions, but from the quiet sense of the conviction of his relative position, which sets the vexed question of self-importance at rest; a peculiarity, I would remark, of great minds. His face also expresses courage in the highest degree, and his phrenological development indicates a vast amount of energy and activity. His forehead is broad and prominent, the occipital and sincipital regions are both large and well-balanced; eyes expressing a singular union of mildness, energy and concentration; cheek and nose both long and well formed. His dress is a common gray suit of faded cassimere, coat, pants and hat—the coat slightly braided on the sleeve, just enough to be perceptible, the collar displaying the mark of major-general. Of his gait it is sufficient to say, that he just goes along: not a particle of the strut, the military swagger, or 'turkey-gobbler' parade, so common among officers of small rank and smaller minds. It would be a profitable study for some of our military swells to devote one hour each day to the contemplation of the 'magnificent plainness' of old Stonewall. To military fame, which they can never hope to attain, he unites the simplicity of a child, the straightforwardness of a Western farmer. There may be those who would be less struck with his appearance as thus accoutred, than if bedizened with lace and holding the reins of a magnificent harb caparisoned and harnessed for glorious war; but to one who had seen him as I had, at Coal Harbour and Malvern Hills, in the rain of shell and the blaze of the dead lights of the battle-field, when nothing less than a mountain would serve as



Long before daylight on the morrow (August 31st), our vedettes were relieved, and others fully rested took their place. Few things of value were left for them: our troopers during the night had ransacked the woods, and appropriated everything which could be of use or ornament. Coffee, cracker bread, sugar, and shoes, were in most demand, while others found overcoats, new saddles, and harness, canteens, and illustrated newspapers: so that when the old guard fell in and trotted back to camp, with large bundles of hay and bags of corn strapped on behind them, few regretted having been sent to the front during night. From the loud conversation and laughter continually going on in their ranks, I had a shrewd suspicion that *another* barrel had been discovered somewhere in the woods, but while taking frequent sucks from their canteens, they winked knowingly at one another, and "never let on" to the commanding officer.

As I approached head-quarters through the numerous infantry camps the men were busy cleaning their arms, and ammunition was being distributed. "I wish the commissary would come along," said one hungry-looking fellow, "for we've been fed on nothing else but cartridges for the past week!" All was bustle and prepa-

---

a breastwork against the enormous shells, and iron bolts 20 inches long, which showered and shrieked through the sickly air, General Jackson in tatters would be the same as General Jackson in gilded uniform. Last Sunday he was dressed in his old faded uniform as usual, and bestrode as common a horse as one could find in a summer's day. In my view he is without peer—he is a nonpareil. He has enough energy to supply a whole manufacturing district, and enough genius to stock two or three military schools like West Point."

ration; but the transportation trains, artillery horses, and the ambulance corps looked so jaded and worn, that I could not help thinking our army was too much prostrated to commence the line of march on that day. In truth, every one was fatigued, and had been fearfully overworked. As to our cattle—the chief machinery of an army—they seemed more dead than alive, and were as bony as Rosinante, nor could all the coaxing in the world, or an abundance of captured hay and corn, tempt them from hanging their heads dejectedly or lying immovable upon the ground. Our mules, even—those animals which stand up under all fatigue like things of steel—were spiritless, and their raw sides told plainly of the fearful labour and forced marches to which they had been subjected. Men and animals seemed inclined for sleep; and I noticed more than one youngster, with a bandaged head or limb, moaning in his sleep: fatigue had numbed the sense of pain. They were too proud to leave ranks for a flesh wound; and there many of these heroic boys lay fast asleep against the trees, with half a blanket thrown round them, their toes protruding from their boots, their garments in rags, and their faces blackened with powder.

“Surely we can’t move to-day,” I remarked to an aide I met, who, rein in hand, was leading his animal to a brook.

“I hope not,” was the reply. “If we do, *I* shan’t; in fact, *I can’t!* I’ve been out half the night, and am more dead than alive; in fact, I will shun head-quarters till perfectly rested; for if I go there, I shall be surely accommodated with another night ride of thirty miles.

I was bogged and bothered last night, and came within an ace of being taken, for the enemy's camps were not more than half a mile from me, and no fires burning. They are moving—I suppose you have heard it? and Jackson is moving also. He started out early this morning, through the hills on our left; and report says he'll fall upon their flanks near Fairfax or Fall's Church. Lee, at the same time, will push the rear—mind if he don't; and then there'll be another big fight, sure, and a few more thousands of us will be tumbled over."

The information was correct. Jackson, with scarcely anything to encumber him but ammunition, was off on a forced march; but his waggons (nearly all empty) were to start towards Leesburg, and be there within three days. What did this mean? The movement of our trains was always an unerring thermometer of coming events; but why send them into Loudon, when the enemy are in force round Winchester, but thirty miles from Leesburg? Such were my thoughts, and I felt nonplussed.

"Hold on awhile," whispered a friend, "there's a heavy cavalry force sent into the Valley, which will soon dislodge them, and send them into Harper's Ferry, howling. Who knows, but we may go into Maryland ere many days," continued my friend, slapping me on the back in triumph.

"Who knows, indeed?" I thought, and smoked in silence. I felt annoyed to think that camp rumours regarding an invasion of Maryland might prove true. The people of that State had done but little for us, and were playing fast and loose with both parties, and as a

State it was unworthy of our assistance. It could not be denied that we were far from being in a fit condition to meet the fierce tide of opposition which would surely roll against us; for my knowledge of Northern craft and hypocrisy convinced me that the enemy had a large force scattered through the States, which would be rapidly concentrated around Washington by land and water, against which a tired, hungry, shoeless, and jaded army of 75,000 men could effect but little. When we suddenly broke up camps round Richmond to pounce upon Pope, our whole available force did not muster more than 85,000; and allowing for losses at Cedar Run, and the three days' engagements on the plains of Manassas, 10,000 may be safely deducted from that total, if not more. A strong, unconquerable will was the sole motive power which had hitherto kept our army moving, but how long even *that* would respond to the many trials, privations, and battles yet in store, was a question of anxiety to me; for if our men were made of oak or steel, they could not have been more severely and fiercely tried than they had been during June, July, and August. "Our generals know best," I thought, in conclusion, and, with that conviction, said nothing.

Next day (September 1) it was understood that Jackson was fully in position on the left flank of the retreating enemy, and Lee began his advance upon Centreville. Little opposition was met with, and we followed on as rapidly as prudence and caution would permit. Pope's army was evidently in a state verging on open panic, so that when our advance guards assailed

their rear on various roads, they broke into confusion, leaving much of their baggage in our hands. The succession of combats that ensued at various times during the day and the morning following were not of great importance, yet many fresh troops which acted as their rear-guard suffered considerably; two leading generals, and many other officers of note, being killed, while vainly endeavouring to rally their panic-stricken troops.\*

Fast as they retreated towards Arlington and Alexandria, they did not effect their inglorious flight within those mighty strongholds without much annoyance and loss from our active cavalry, who hung in clouds upon their rear, pistolling and sabring with but little opposition. All the roads, indeed, gave endless tokens of the many combats which had ensued, for dead, wounded, baggage, and prisoners were numerous. It was never expected by the humblest drummer in our ranks that Lee would attempt any assault upon Arlington Heights or the entrenched camps extending for miles round

---

\* The enemy's loss in these skirmishes has been estimated at more than 1,000 killed and wounded. Among many officers who fell were General Stevens and Kearney. The latter met his death in a singular manner. The Federal cavalry finding Jackson close upon their flank, and Lee in hot pursuit at the rear, in the neighbourhood of Fairfax Court-house, beat a hasty retreat, and infantry becoming alarmed, abandoned everything, and ran also. Stevens and Kearney immediately ached about with their divisions; and while the latter was out reconnoitring, he suddenly came upon one of our Georgia regiments. Perceiving danger, he shouted, "Don't fire—I'm a friend!" but instantly wheeled his horse round, and, lying flat down upon the animal, had fairly escaped many bullets, when one struck him at the bottom of the spine, and, ranging upwards, killed him almost instantly.

Alexandria. Lee's estate was on the Heights, and no one knew better than he the almost impregnable nature of the many fortifications thrown up there in the fall of the previous year. Operations were contemplated in another direction. Jackson was proceeding towards Leesburg by the Drainsville (or river) road, while many troops were marching parallel to him on the Gum Spring road, so that the Upper Potomac was evidently intended to be our next field of operations.

In following the general line of march, which was now well beaten by the passage of troops, I frequently fell in with an old acquaintance; and the scenes through which we passed were familiarly known to me. I have before remarked on the great fertility of the fields of Loudon and adjacent counties compared with the plains of Manassas and parts of Fauquier county, through which we had but recently marched. I was informed, indeed, that the old farmers had been advised by Confederate officers to stay at home and cultivate their fields, even when we had retreated thence seventeen months before; so that, well-stocked barn-yards and abundant crops of every sort of grain were now awaiting our long lines of empty waggons which accompanied us. The behaviour of Federals to the inhabitants had been cruel and exacting; but not dreaming of our ever visiting those parts again, they never imagined these accumulated crops would by any chance fall into our hands. Their calculations were incorrect, and our advance was pursued so rapidly that we gave no opportunity for their removal or destruction.

Our march was greeted everywhere with loud demonstrations of joy ; and when it became known that our destination was Maryland, enthusiasm ran wild. Old and young, white and black, thronged the roadsides with banners and waving handkerchiefs. Gray-haired fathers and half frantic mothers sought sons and relatives in the various regiments which continually passed along the hot and dusty roads. Everywhere it seemed a holiday. The mere fact that the enemy had been repeatedly whipped, filled every one with so much joy, that women young and old wept freely, while old men waved their hats and tossed them in the air with delight. Tables were spread for us by the roadside, and superintended by some bright-eyed girl, while darkies grinned, and laughed, and skipped about with all the grimaces and antics of young monkeys. Nods of recognition were frequent along the Gum Spring road, for our brigade had been stationed many months in Loudon ; and as we approached Leesburg, I was met by farmer Wilkins, who, in a white felt hat, blue homespun coat, and yellow leather riding-breeches, fell into line, and almost squeezed my fingers off in his warmth and excitement. From him I learned some particulars regarding Yankee rule on the Upper Potomac since our departure, and the recital affected the old man even to tears — “Not that I weep for the loss of my sons,” said he ; “but I *do* cry because I am not young enough to bear arms against the cursed wretches who have been quartered among us so long.”

It grieves me to omit the many instances of petty

despotism in Leesburg which my friend related to me ; but a single example must suffice. I must premise that the first act of Geary's men had been to sack the shop of Dr. Motts, an apothecary, and gut the building. Geary himself took up his quarters in Mott's residence, to the great discomfort and annoyance of madame and the children—the doctor being with us in the army. From this residence Geary issued various rhapsodical orders, and strutted about with a clanking sabre like a modern Alexander, before whom all the rustic population were expected to bow down.

Dr. Janney, an old gentleman of sixty years, was summoned before him. "You were president of the State convention which decided upon secession, Mr. Janney?" "I feel proud to own it," was the calm reply. "I want accommodation in your house, sir, for several officers. I hear you refuse." "I have no accommodation in the house, sir, for more than my family. I *cannot* accommodate your men, and *would* not if I could." Despite his years, his tottering gait and infirmities, he was immediately sent to Washington, and incarcerated in a loathsome prison. He was desired to take the oath of allegiance as the price of his release, but the brave old man smiled, and replied with scorn, "Never, while there is breath in my body!"

My old friend finished his narrative by telling me that the enemy had, during our absence, erected several pontoon-bridges over the river, at various points; and although some of them required repairs, he was certain we could avail ourselves of them, and soon render them practicable for crossing into Maryland. The river was



low, however; and even should the temporary bridges prove worthless, there were several fords by which we could cross, and establish ourselves in the rear of the many Federal fortifications which in times past had frowned so ominously on our small force under Evans.

We were now approaching Leesburg. The town lay at the foot of the hills over which we were then crossing, and the loud roar of voices, and waving of banners, told me that the head of our column was entering the place amid the wildest demonstrations of its inhabitants. Bands played, colours waved, men shouted, women wept, and all was a scene of dust, confusion, and noise. "Dixie," "Maryland," the "Bonnie Blue Flag," and the "Marseillaise," were drowned in the tumult of voices, bumping of waggons, jingling of artillery, and the heavy tramp of infantry. Vainly did ambitious musicians blow till red or black in the face; the mouths of commandants were seen to move, and gestures followed, but no sounds of command were audible; yells, cheers, shouts, laughter, and rapid high-toned greetings were heard on every hand, until I began to think we were marching into Bedlam. Bread, cheese, butter, eggs, meats, fruits—everything eatable was strewn on the side walks; while loaves of bread were flying through the air in all directions, which were quickly caught and stuck on the men's bayonets. The bayonet, indeed, was particularly useful in this respect, and I could not help noticing that many had new shoes, loaves of bread, chunks of pork and fresh meat, dangling thus from bayonet points; while cups of tea, coffee, soup, and the

like were freely handed to our thirsty fellows, who hastily drank and joined ranks again.

Our officers kept moving, however, and no halt was sounded until we were a considerable distance beyond town, and strict guards were placed to prevent stragglers from going to or staying there. I learned that Jackson's corps had travelled by the Drainsville road, passed over Goose Creek, two miles east of and below Leesburg, had rapidly pushed ahead to Point of Rocks, where he crossed, broke up the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad there, thus isolating Harper's Ferry from all telegraphic and other connection with Washington, and was still pushing forward towards Frederick, the State capital of Maryland. Such rapid marching seems incredible with defective transportation and worn-out troops. It must be confessed, however, that no part of our army was troubled with loaded trains, for, except extra ammunition, all the waggons were empty!

Parties of our cavalry swam their horses at Edward's Ferry, and having scoured the country far and wide, even to within a short distance of Washington (thirty miles off), returned with information to the effect that no enemy was visible—all their numerous earth-works were tenantless, and no opposition need be expected to our crossing. Among other points, it was ascertained that White's Ford, Coon's Ford, Ball's Bluff, and other places, could be well crossed by infantry and cavalry, and, if repaired, the enemy's old pontoons would prove safe enough for artillery and other trains. These places were selected, and the work of crossing immediately began. Cavalry with light

artillery landed first; and at different places infantry were pouring across, the water in many parts of the shoals not being more than two or three feet deep. It was a refreshing amusement on a warm day, and our dusty infantry seemed to enter into the spirit of the thing with right good will. Accidents would sometimes occur, and many a field officer, from indiscretion or bravado, deviated from the prescribed route, and suddenly found himself, horse and all, floundering about in deep water, amid the derisive groans and jeers of his troops; while an odd Dutchman or two were observed standing on the banks, bewailing the loss of their drums, as the huge instruments floated and rolled down stream towards Washington.

Considering all things, our passage of the Potomac was a decided success, and no sooner accomplished than instant dispositions were made for moving on towards Frederick, and forming line with Jackson, already in battle array there. Bands played "My Maryland," until the sound was oppressive; for I did not believe at the time that our occupation of any portion of the State would be of great duration. We had not been long upon the march, however, ere cavalry men and quartermasters rode a considerable distance into the interior, and were soon actively engaged in buying up whatever stores could be of service to us, so that we had not progressed far ere many things were delivered out in rations, which had been unknown to the majority of us for many months. It was evident that chiefs of the quartermaster's and commissary departments had received full and final instructions, and were obeying

them with alacrity, and to the letter. No violence or incivility was shown on our part, our agents were received with much urbanity, and all transactions were satisfactorily arranged with Confederate scrip or Federal paper. The few inhabitants we met betrayed evident pleasure at our arrival, but were extremely cautious and circumspect in showing it. They would look on and smile as we passed, but seemed much constrained in manner, as if feeling certain that Union men were in their midst quietly taking note of all actions or expressions, and ready to divulge names at fitting opportunities. Some few young men openly avowed their Southern feeling, and joined us, but the greater number stood aloof as if thinking, "I should much like to assist you if I dare; but how long will they remain? I am between two fires; I must sacrifice principle and secure my home. Let them fight it out; for Maryland will go with the strongest." Women were more ardent in their expressions than men; and while I cannot but despise the thousands standing with hands in pockets idly looking on, while Southern States were fighting their battles, I must admire the beauty, kindness and whole-souled fervour of Maryland women, who, in thousands of ways, evinced their loyalty and love for our cause.

But while various divisions of our army were taking up positions between Frederick and the river, movements were transpiring in other directions. It was said that a heavy force under Johnson was between Fairfax and Centreville watching the enemy's movements round Arlington Heights and Alexandria;

and that, should they think proper to sally forth from those strongholds, and make a rush for Richmond by the Manassas route, while Lee was far away, their progress would be stopped at Centreville by heavy earth-works and batteries, which had been hurriedly thrown up there for that purpose. The report was plausible, and the necessity for such precautions admitted by all, but whether any such force or fortifications existed in *fact* I have never been able to learn with certainty.

Cavalry were reported advancing rapidly upon Winchester, and accounts came in of several severe skirmishes with the Federals under White, who was said to be falling back upon Harper's Ferry, where General Miles commanded with 13,000 men and 50 guns. I also heard that some of our forces had branched off from Leesburg, and were marching towards the village of Berlin, situated but a few miles from, and in the rear of, the Maryland Heights, commanding Harper's Ferry from the north bank of the Potomac; while others were said to be secretly moving towards the Loudon Heights, which could command part of Harper's Ferry, Bolivar, Bolivar Heights, and a large area of the Shenandoah Valley from the south side of the Potomac. This information was given with much secrecy; but I could scarcely credit the idea that Miles and White were such blockheads as not to be aware of the fact that forces were thus secretly massing in different directions, and only waiting for final orders to encircle them. From their actions one would be led to suppose Federal commanders were asleep, or that they thought all Confederate attacks would come from the direction of

Winchester, where much of our cavalry was stationed, foraging and the like. Suffice it to say, that many of our troops must have been elsewhere than in line between the Potomac and Frederick, for, except Jackson's corps, I saw few others there.

We had now been in Maryland some time, and were drawn up in line-of-battle night and day, yet no enemy appeared. A full week had elapsed since we fired our last shot at the Federal rear-guard near Fairfax; and, although in the enemy's country, accumulating and transporting into Virginia vast quantities of supplies, no signs were visible of the Federal's approach, and the usual greeting among us was the stereotyped expression used by McClellan during the winter months of '61 and the early part of '62, viz., "All quiet on the Upper Potomac to-night!"

Our various departments were extremely busy, and from their energy and industry were evidently making the most of their time. New waggons and teams were being bought in all directions; our cavalry had been scouring the whole country far and wide to our rear, having penetrated to Chambersburg and other towns of Pennsylvania; and as they sent to our lines all that they purchased or appropriated, vast quantities of all things were being transported to the river and sent across into Virginia. In fact, waggon-trains were unceasingly moving, with captured or purchased supplies, from the first moment we put foot on Maryland soil.

General Lee had issued a stirring Address to the Marylanders, and it was hoped that it might have some effect upon the sluggish population of that State, who

sighed over their wrongs, but sat and apathetically gazed while others achieved her independence. Few responded to the call—all were calculating chances dimly foreshadowed in their future; and it may be that thousands in distant parts of the State, and particularly in Baltimore, would have willingly rushed to meet us, but the Federal system of espionage was so scientifically arranged that a cat could not mew in Baltimore without the fact being instantly recorded in full at the provost-marshal's office.

From reports daily reaching us, previous rumours were confirmed, that Pope, having resigned, had been sent to quell Indian uprisings in Minnesota Territory, and that M'Clellan was once again in power. It was also known that heavy forces from all parts of the States were rapidly arriving at Washington; and that his army, thus hurriedly formed from the remnants of every command in the service, far outnumbered ours, and indications were given that an onward movement would soon commence. Our generals had important work to accomplish, however, before M'Clellan could possibly arrive; hence it did not at all surprise us to learn that Jackson, as usual, was about to take the initiative.\* On the 10th, reports came in that the

---

\* Jackson was the observed of all observers during our stay in Maryland, and hundreds travelled many score miles to see the great original "Stonewall," against which Federal generals had so often broken their heads. Crowds were continually hanging round his head-quarters, and peeping through the windows, as if anxious to catch him at his "incantations," for many believed he was in league with the Old Boy and had constant intercourse with him. Others, again, actually thought that he was continually praying, and imagined that angelic spirits were

Federal cavalry advance-guard had already reached the Monocacy river, a few miles fronting our line above and below Fredericksburg, and that heavy skirmishing had occurred there. This was positive proof that M'Clellan was advancing, and far more rapidly than we had expected.

On the 11th, our line from Frederick to the Potomac was suddenly broken up, and Jackson's corps proceeded very rapidly towards Hagerstown, as if intending to penetrate into Pennsylvania. Ambrose Hill moved his division towards Jefferson, as if going in the direction of Harper's Ferry. The whole army, indeed, was leaving the open country, and taking up positions on the west side of the South Mountains, which, extending in a long chain, presented a natural barrier to M'Clellan's further advance. Up to the present time, he had enjoyed the advantage of but one good road from Washington to Frederick, and beyond the latter place, if he should be tempted to push on so far, he would find none but the ordinary dirt roads. Nay, worse than this: should he attempt to pursue our supposed retreating army, he must of necessity pass the mountain chain through several gaps—one being at Boonesborough; one southward of the latter place, called Turner's Gap, on the Middleton road; another, more southwardly still,

---

his companions and councillors; and it was not until the great man had mounted his old horse, and frequently aired himself in the streets, that many began to think him less than supernatural. His shabby attire and unpretending deportment quite disappointed the many who expected to see a great display of gold lace and feathers; and when he ordered the guards to clear his quarters of idle crowds, many went away muttering, "Oh, he's no great shakes after all!"



called Crampton's Gap, on the Burkittsville road; and one near the Potomac, on the direct route from Petersburg to Harper's Ferry. To delay M'Clellan's movements through these mountain passes, D. H. Hill had thrown his own division and a few other troops into these gaps; Hood, with his brave Texans and others, held Boonesborough; Hill himself was at Turner's Gap, on the Federal main line of advance; and other generals at the points lower down towards the river. All these passes had been fortified by Hill, who on the 12th had all things in readiness to fiercely dispute all attempts at assault. It was not expected that he could hold the vast numbers of the enemy at bay for an indefinite time; but all who knew D. H. Hill and Hood were conscious that the enemy would have hot work before dislodging them, and must lose much time in doing so. This, in fact, was all that Lee originally intended, as the events that now rapidly succeeded each other fully demonstrated.

Reports having reached him on the 11th, while on the banks of the Monocacy, that Miles and White were strongly fortified at Harper's Ferry, and that the Confederates had made no demonstrations in that direction, M'Clellan imagined that those generals were able to withstand a siege of many weeks, if so compelled, and that little danger was to be apprehended from any rebel diversion in that direction. The strong positions occupied by D. H. Hill in the South Mountain passes appeared so formidable, and the small force was so well and so ostentatiously displayed, that M'Clellan imagined the mountain barrier to be garrisoned and

supported by the whole Confederate army, so that much valuable time was consumed by him in preparing to dislodge it. From the 11th to the 13th, little or nothing was attempted by him, save frequent reconnaissances; and although the roads from the Monocacy to Frederick\* and the South Mountains were open to him, his advance was slow and tedious; while, on the other hand, Confederate generals were unusually active, and preparing to capture the Ferry, together with the garrison and its numerous supplies. The position of D. H. Hill in the mountains had been designed for no other purpose than to occupy the roads and delay McClellan until Miles and White had surrendered.

---

\* Some very amusing scenes occurred in Frederick during our retreat from the place. On the morning of the 12th, few troops were there save two or three squadrons of Stuart's cavalry. Burnside's forces were rapidly advancing upon the town, and his cavalry were not more than two miles distant. Leave-takings were going on, and patriotic young Marylanders, who had joined our army, were on door-steps, talking to or kissing their sweethearts, desirous of remaining until the last moment. A great noise and much dust visible at the east end of the town told of the Federal advance, and all our young love-sick soldiers immediately mounted and left the place. Within a few moments, up rode a few squadrons of Federal cavalry, commanded by a Dutch major with immense moustache. Halting before the city-hall, with a great fuss and show, he exclaimed: "Vere ish de Got tam repels? Vere ish de Got fur tam Stuart—vere ish he mit his cavalerie? Let me shee him, unt I show him some tings!" A lady present told him that a few of FitzHugh Lee's cavalry had just left. "Goot! young voomans," said Meinheer, and immediately started in pursuit, saying, "Ve show de repels some tings." The major and his command had fairly got into the main street, when a few squadrons of Confederate cavalry met them, and both parties rushed together in strife, and, within a few moments afterwards, the Federals retreated, amid the hoots and groans of those at the windows. The Dutch major was, shortly afterwards, pulled out of a cottage, with a table-cloth wound round a slight wound in his head, was sent to our rear.

While the shrewd and calculating Hill was deceiving McClellan's advance, Jackson and others were busily availing themselves of the precious time thus gained to achieve success at the Ferry. Having started from Frederick on the 11th, Jackson rapidly pushed ahead on the Hagerstown road, as if intending to occupy that place, but immediately branched off to the left towards the Potomac, and crossed it the same night at Williamsport. No opposition was met with, and the column still proceeded onwards, our cavalry advance having a few hours before handsomely driven Colonel White and the Federal cavalry from Martinsburg, where many useful stores were discovered and appropriated. Still moving forward, Jackson pursued the Shepherdstown road, and arrived within sight of Bolivar on the afternoon of the 12th. The range of hills in Bolivar was occupied by the enemy, and extensive earth-works had been dug to defend them. It was evident at a glance that while the enemy held the formidable positions of the Maryland and Loudon Heights, frowning as they were with cannon and fully commanding the Bolivar Heights and the whole country for many miles round, that any attack upon Bolivar and its surroundings would be mere waste of life and powder. So that having opened a furious cannonade on the latter place to attract attention and detain the main body of the enemy on the Virginia side of the river, Jackson was relying upon the attack which other parts of our force was hourly expected to make from the rear of the Maryland Heights. It was known that nearly every gun on those heights pointed up the Shenandoah Valley, and

little harm was expected from them when taken in reverse.

On Friday, simultaneously with Jackson's appearance before Bolivar, west of the Potomac, a large infantry force of ours made its appearance at Solomon's Gap, and was three miles away easward on the Heights, gradually approaching the highest point of the mountain chain, which overlooks Harper's Ferry at the River. A close inspection of the ground satisfied us that our attack in that direction would be "up hill" work: the top of the Heights having been cleared of superfluous timber, it was seen that the enemy had erected barricades of wood, from behind which light artillery could play upon our advance. The position was truly formidable, and, if provisioned and garrisoned properly, was capable of holding out for any length of time.

Towards sunset, our men had gradually worked their way within a few hundred yards of the enemy's main position, and skirmishing became exceedingly brisk and lively. During the entire afternoon, we could plainly hear and sometimes see Jackson's artillery shelling the enemy in and around Bolivar; and when darkness came on, we all felt certain that the next day would find us masters of the position, from which we could shell the enemy out from the Bolivar Heights across the river, and thus fully invest the place.

Next morning at sunrise we opened fire, and a fierce struggle of infantry commenced for the possession of the Maryland Heights, while, at the same time, Jackson was gradually pushing the enemy in all directions from his

front. Towards noon, after repeated efforts, and in the face of artillery which had been turned on us, our men rushed over the barricades and successively took several very strong positions, from which determined men should not have been so easily repulsed. Making one final charge, the heights were cleared, and the enemy driven in great confusion down the opposite side. Three shells thrown towards Bolivar Heights, and the loud yells of our men, telegraphed our success to Jackson, who now attacked the enemy from every side. His advance, the smoke of which was seen about one mile away in the valley, was slow and all "up hill," yet he was gradually forcing the enemy from their strong positions ; but was unwilling apparently to sacrifice many men in the accomplishment of his purpose by an assault in force, rightly concluding that their position would prove untenable after our possession of the Maryland Heights.

At the close of the second day's operations, Jackson had turned the enemy's left on the Bolivar Heights, our troops were in full possession of the Maryland Heights; and all were busily engaged in placing cannon in position for the morrow's work. The whole scene below us was animating. The long lines of Federal brigades on the hill sides and in the valley, were all turned towards Jackson in the west; smoke of the batteries curled away from the woods, while on every hand we could perceive our forces taking up positions from which a perfect shower of shot could be thrown upon the gradually contracting lines of the enemy. Troops and artillery were already on the Loudon Heights to our

left, batteries swept the Charleston, Shepherdstown, and Sandy Hook roads; and all that the Federals did was to protect or destroy the several bridges by which our forces on the east could communicate with Jackson on the west side of the stream. In short, the enemy's fate was sealed; they could not live long under our concentrated fire from various directions, and they must soon surrender. Yet they were evidently fighting against time, and seemed determined to stand and be slaughtered rather than capitulate; for the fact was possibly known to them as to us, that M'Clellan was not twenty miles distant, with an overwhelming force; and should D. H. Hill in the mountain chain give way, and fail to hold him in check, nothing could prevent the place from being speedily relieved.

Next morning, all was silent, and the enemy perhaps imagined that circumstances had forced us to abandon the siege. Great activity was observed among them, as we could plainly perceive from the Maryland and Loudon Heights, thousands of feet above the scene. Immediately after noon, Jackson's attack was recommenced with great fury; while, to add to the enemy's dismay, batteries on the Loudon and Maryland Heights, and from every hill in our possession, were pouring shot and shell upon their masses below, so that they knew not where to look for shelter, and were moving about in all directions. The people in Harper's Ferry itself were running to and fro like madmen, vainly endeavouring to escape the shells that were bursting in and around the place. Officers on horseback were galloping furiously through the streets; infantry endea-

voured to screen themselves as best they could behind houses, rocks, earthworks, and the like; while the long line of smoke around Bolivar Heights told of Jackson's steady advance upon those positions. At sunset, the Federals were pushed into the valley, and seemed huddled together in a small space awaiting slaughter. Had daylight lasted a little longer, or the attack commenced sooner, the work would have ended on Sunday the 14th.

At nightfall, all was bustle in throwing up works still nearer the enemy, and additional guns were planted in all directions, for it was evident that our officers were pushed for time, and seemed determined to bring matters to a climax early on the morrow. When morning dawned, the bombardment was recommenced, our batteries vomited fire and smoke from every point of the compass, while the echo of so many pieces among the mountains not only made it impossible to hear ordinary sounds, but it seemed that the very hills trembled to their foundations. At length white flags began to appear at various points along the enemy's lines, and the firing gradually ceased. I saw a party of horsemen ride towards Jackson's position on Bolivar Heights, and, after some short time, our signal corps telegraphed that the enemy had unconditionally surrendered.

This fact was soon known throughout our whole force, and loud long yells rent the sky; from hill and plain the roar of voices could be heard in all directions, but those who understood the true position of affairs were loth to cheer, or give way to any extravagant demonstrations of joy; for on the previous day many

of us had heard heavy cannonading going on eastward, and couriers, hot, dusty, and jaded, brought word that a fierce engagement had taken place at the several passes in the South Mountains. It was understood that D. H. Hill had been particularly pressed at Turner's Gap, and was forced to relinquish his position at night-fall, after having sustained severe loss, and inflicted much punishment upon the enemy. No one doubted that Hill had fought heroically; but from the moment that Hooker and Reno's corps attacked him at 3 P.M. the previous day, it was evident he was greatly outnumbered, and unable to extend his line of defence over many points of the mountain, which commanded and overlooked the Gap. Hood, who had been fighting higher up the mountain chain, and defending the pass at Boonesborough, rapidly gathered his men and marched to Hill's relief; and it was doubtless the headlong, reckless valour of these reinforcements which saved Hill from total discomfiture. The loss on either side at Boonesborough, Turner's Gap, and Crampton Gap—the latter being forced by Franklin's corps on the same day—was severe for the time all were engaged; and if 2,500 killed, wounded, and prisoners is put down for our casualties, I am sure it will not more than cover the total. Of the enemy's loss we had no positive information, but as they were the assailants, it was possibly much greater.\*

---

\* Brigadier-General Garland was the only officer of note among the Confederates who fell at South Mountain. McClellan admitted the Federal loss to be some 2,500 killed and wounded. Major-General Reno was killed there just as the action closed.



Hill's obstinate defence of the mountain passes had, however, delayed M'Clellan from marching directly to the relief of Harper's Ferry; and thus gained a day's time for Jackson, who, as we have seen, was on the eve of accomplishing the conquest of Harper's Ferry on the 14th. Yet Jackson was in a critical position; he was fully aware that M'Clellan was now west of the South Mountains, and pushing after Longstreet and Hill in the direction of Sharpsburg. Time was more precious then than ever; hence it was that Jackson opened his bombardment on the 15th so early in the morning. Our various army corps and divisions were very much scattered, and as the enemy were rapidly following Lee, the greatest expedition was necessary to form a junction with him before any heavy engagement could take place.

When Miles, therefore, after a council of war, had run up white flags\* in different parts of his lines, and the

---

\* The moment white flags were raised in token of surrender, General Miles was struck by a cannon-shot, and his thigh was torn away. "Oh, my God, I am killed," he exclaimed, and fell from his horse. His death was purely accidental; for the smoke of batteries and the haze of morning prevented our gunners from detecting truce flags then flying. Among the 12,000 troops and over 300 commissioned officers captured, I noticed many of the following regiments, viz.:—87th, 32nd, 3rd, and 60th Ohio infantry; the 12th, 126th, 111th, 39th, 115th, and 135th New York Infantry; 1st and 3rd Maryland Home Brigade (infantry); 65th Illinois, 9th Vermont, 15th Indiana. Several New York, Ohio, and Indiana batteries were attached to these various regiments. Of artillery, over fifty pieces fell into our hands, and, among them, twelve 3-inch rifled guns; six of James's steel guns, rifled; six 24-lb. howitzers; four 20-lb. Parrot guns, rifled; six 12-lb. guns, rifled; four 12-lb. howitzers; two 10-in. Dahlgren guns; one 50-lb. Parrot gun, rifled; six 6-lb. guns, rifled; and several of "Fremont's" guns, viz. mountain

capitulation was officially announced, the enemy were ordered to march into the village of Bolivar and stack arms, which they did with much apparent reluctance. There were no signs of insubordination or mutiny—all passed off very quietly and orderly; and as they filed past in fours, and took up the line of march eastward towards the Ferry, to commence their journey to Washington, many began to laugh and smoke good-humouredly, jocularly observing that they “hoped it would be a long time ere their parole would be broken by any exchange.” The sudden change in the position of affairs within so few hours made us languid and sleepy; where all had been life and bustle, noise and carnage, but three hours before, was now all quietness and peace.\* The enemy were busy in packing knap-

---

howitzers. Most of these guns were of superb manufacture. In addition to these were several captured on the Maryland Heights, viz :—two 126-lb. rifled guns; one 96-lb. rifled gun; and four brass Napoleons, rifled. The commissariat was found to have more than sufficient rations for two weeks for 14,000 men, besides large quantities of forage, hay, straw, corn, meal, &c. Their waggon-train consisted of over 200 waggons, with excellent teams and harness. The number of arms taken was over 12,000, with complete equipments for twice that number of men. Of ammunition, medicine, and general stores, we secured large quantities. Several regimental flags were discovered among our spoils; but the enemy made away with many, to prevent them falling into our hands. The casualties on our part were not numerous; the enemy suffered considerably from our concentrated fire.

\* An unfortunate Yankee letter-writer, who was among the prisoners, saw Jackson for a moment, and thus describes him:—“Old Stonewall, after riding along the river bank, returned to Bolivar Heights, the observed of all observers. He was dressed in the coarsest kind of homespun, seedy and dirty at that; wore an old hat which any Northern beggar would consider an insult to have offered him; and in his general appearance was in no respect to be distinguished from the mongrel bare-footed crew who followed his fortunes. I had heard much of the decayed

sacks and havresacks; regiments marching by with arms, returned in a few moments without them; waggons of every description, cannon of every calibre, officers of every grade, and troops from every State, were passing and repassing towards our head-quarters, and within a few hours all had filed past on parole. Then, many of our troops began to move up the Potomac towards Williamsport to join Lee, and participate in the great engagement which was expected to take place between the two armies.

---

appearance of the rebel soldiers, but such a looking crowd! Ireland, in her worst straits, could present no parallel; and yet they glory in their shame!"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

M'Clellan's unaccountable Inaction—Activity of Lee and Jackson—Engagements at the South Mountain—Approach of the Federals to Sharpsburg—Battle of Antietam, or Sharpshurg, September 17th—An Indecisive Engagement—Retreat of the Southern Army into Virginia—Jackson guards the Rear, and Repulse of the Enemy's Advance-guard, &c.

FROM a general review of our operations between the time of Jackson's departure from Frederick on the 11th and the surrender of Harper's Ferry on the 15th, and from an estimate of the forces and the distance of the two armies operating within so few miles of each other during that time, M'Clellan's tardiness of action, in the face of Jackson's small force and activity, seemed to me inexplicable. The advance posts of the Federal cavalry exchanged shots with ours on the banks of the Monocacy on the 11th, and at that time the true state of affairs must have been known to Federal commanders, for Union sympathizers were numerous, and many escaped through our lines who could have given every information. On the 12th, when Jackson had crossed into Virginia, and appeared before the enemy, strongly posted on the Bolivar Heights, numerous cavalry men had left Miles's command, who, doubtless, did fully inform M'Clellan of the contem-

plated investment of Harper's Ferry. Under these circumstances, his divergence from the true route to the Ferry by Petersville and Crampton's Gap, to attack Hill in the strong positions of Boonesborough and Turner's Gap, was unaccountable, unless, indeed, he was misled by fabulous rumours regarding our strength and resources at the former place.

Had M'Clellan acted with energy, and taken the river road to Harper's Ferry, there was nothing to prevent him from raising the siege; and by passing over into Virginia, he would have completely cut off our retreat by the several fords above. It is true that such a movement would have left Maryland unprotected, and Lee might have marched on to Washington without serious resistance, and this may be the true reason for M'Clellan's movements. He could have had no doubt that Lee would have willingly availed himself of such a chance, and, having a shorter route to travel, he might have outmarched him, and taken Washington, perhaps, ere the Federal commander could have traversed the south bank, and arrived at the Chain, or Long Bridges, to cross over and oppose him. Nevertheless, when he heard of the investment on the 12th, he might certainly have relieved the place from the Maryland side, at least; or, by suddenly and rapidly marching on Lee and Longstreet, have forced an engagement, and possibly defeated both those generals before Jackson, Ambrose Hill, and M'Laws could have reinforced them. The truth is, M'Clellan was too slow and cautious—he was not equal to the occasion; and while revolving the chances before him, Miles sur-

rendered, and part of our force had crossed into Maryland again, and was quietly waiting in Lee's lines for the Federal advance.

When Lee was made aware of D. H. Hill's retreat from the various gaps in the South Mountain, and that McClellan's army was pouring through them, he became fully convinced that the Federal commanders were determined to provoke a general engagement before Jackson and others could come to his relief. On the evening of the 15th, therefore, when fully assured of the fall of Harper's Ferry, he withdrew his forces (50,000 strong) towards Sharpsburg, and crossing Antietam river, arranged his line of battle on the west bank, and seemed determined to hold the position until the arrival of his whole force. On that same day, McClellan's army, some 95,000 strong, with 300 pieces of artillery, were at Reedysville, but a few miles east of the river, and was reported to be slowly approaching.

The Antietam river strikes the Potomac almost at right angles, and is spanned by three bridges; the centre one being on the direct road to Sharpsburg, not more than three-quarters of a mile beyond; the second was about two miles lower down, and commanded a road which swept towards the Potomac; and the third was at least two miles above the central one, and conducted a road which led direct to Hagerstown. Beyond this upper bridge the stream is fordable in many places. The river runs through a small valley, and parallel with it the land gradually rises, but on the west bank is far more hilly and broken than on the east; while at the bridge leading direct to Sharpsburg,

and at the lower one, all approach is commanded by bluffs or hillocks, so that a defending force could be well screened behind them, and any troops attacking be exposed to great loss in attempting to force a passage. At the upper parts of our line, which was formed on or behind this series of undulations, the stream stretched away to the east, so that an enemy could easily ford the river above us, and operate on our left flank.

Our forces were so disposed as to command all approach to the bridges over the Antietam; Longstreet commanding the right, Lee the centre, and D. H. Hill the left; but our line appeared so weak, scattered as it was over more than four miles, that it seemed almost impossible it could withstand a numerous enemy energetically assailing it. On the 15th, our cavalry were busy annoying the enemy's advance, and conducting long trains within the lines, which were immediately sent forward into Virginia. Meanwhile the long line of dust rising over the landscape in various directions, and the appearance of white canvas-covered waggons slowly moving over the light green fields, or disappearing in, and emerging from, the woods, gave every evidence that an immense force was cautiously approaching to the attack. Our main army was in perplexed thought regarding Jackson's movements, and felt extremely anxious for his speedy junction. Strong picket-guards were thrown out; light artillery, with heavy infantry supports, were within short distance of the bridges; and active squads of cavalry were continually moving from point to point along our whole front.

On the 16th, when the mists of morning had risen from the landscape, the smoke of camp-fires extending east of the river, told us that the enemy had placed their troops in position parallel to ours; but, from the quantity of smoke ascending, we judged that their centre and right centre were much more heavily guarded than any other portion of their lines. Severe skirmishing took place with bodies of troops along both banks of the river, and, as would appear, with some effect on our side, for the enemy seemed to desist, and never endeavoured to make any decided advance in their centre or left. It would appear that M'Clellan was as totally unaware of our position as of our strength, for he instantly opened a furious cannonade along our whole front, and on his left (commanded by Burnside) the storm of shot and shell was so fierce and incessant that numerous missiles passed harmlessly over our heads, and fell within the village or town of Sharpsburg, causing much destruction of property. Perhaps it was the desire of M'Clellan to ascertain our force and true position, but in this he was grievously deceived, for, except a few field-batteries which here and there replied to his vindictive cannonade, no display of force was made on our side. We bided our time patiently, feeling assured that Lee had successfully deceived them as to our position and force, and that their main attack would be delayed until the arrival of Jackson and others should reinforce and equalize the strength of our lines.

Soon after noon, while the rival batteries were contending at the centre and lower bridges, and other parts



of the line, the appearance of heavy forces approaching to and threatening our left, gave positive assurance that the enemy were about to commence operations by out-flanking and attacking us in the weakest part of our position. Hood and other stubborn leaders held this ground, and the fight soon became animated and determined. The enemy, in strong force, had appeared at the upper bridge and fords above about three o'clock p.m., and forced a passage; but, although our defence of those positions, from paucity of forces, was somewhat feeble, the Federals suffered extremely ere gaining a positive footing west of the stream. As their advance for the most part was through open fields, and over very gently-rising grounds, the sweep of our artillery, and accurate aim of the best sharpshooters in the world (Texans), told with disastrous effect upon their heavy columns. Confusion was frequent among their ranks, and it required the utmost efforts of the officers, aided by their personal example, to induce the troops to keep ranks, and advance upon us. Field-officers rode to the front with a great show of gallantry; but it was not until fully satisfied of our weakness that they moved forward with any spirit of determination.

To us it was matter of surprise that the few troops protecting our left should have made such a determined resistance, and have held so long the large forces of the enemy in check. Nor did the news of their withdrawal from the disputed position cause any annoyance, for we were well aware that the gently-rising ground extending to the dense woods beyond was still held by

them, and that it commanded all approach in that direction. The enemy, indeed, seemed well contented to remain in the captured belt of timber, and did not dare to occupy the open grounds and fields of still standing corn which intervened between their own position and ours. Yet, from the multitude of fresh troops pouring upon the scene, and taking up positions to our front and left, it was immediately perceived that their real object was to turn it, and threaten our retreat to the Potomac. Their numbers were so great that many of us felt uneasy for the morrow, and their pickets in many places were uncomfortably near to ours. How long Jackson would be absent none could conjecture, and great uneasiness was manifested by many high in command.

It is possible, however, that the enemy's early discovery of our weakness on the left saved us from disaster, for they instantly began to mass most of their troops in that direction, thus forewarning Lee where to send all available reinforcements that might arrive during night, or on the morrow. No demonstration of a serious character had been made on our centre or right during the day, and it was reasonable to suppose that the heavy concentration of troops against our left was more than a feint; for, should the impending action be severely pressed on the next day, the distance was too great for these masses to be countermarched against any other parts of our line. Our outposts were unusually vigilant and active during night, and kept head-quarters fully informed of all that transpired. The enemy had gained

ground in no direction save the left, and our new position there was considered preferable to the first, from which we had been driven during the afternoon, for the corn-fields were excellent shelter, the fences good concealment and protection against infantry, while to the rear of these the ground gradually rose to thick woods, in which were planted several excellent batteries.

While seated round camp-fires, and chatting during the silence of night, faint sounds of cheering in our rear, the gradually increasing noise caused by the arrival of mounted men, the sounds of artillery bugles, and the perceptible tramp of heavy columns, gave pleasing indications of the approach of reinforcements. The arrival of couriers and the jingle of artillery soon dispelled any doubt that existed about the character of the new arrivals: it was the victorious Jackson advancing from Harper's Ferry, and his columns came in with such order, and made such a rustle among the deep deposit of leaves, that it seemed to doubly magnify their numbers and strength. They swiftly passed through the woods and took position on the left, which movement occasioned many changes, so that regiments and batteries were continually passing to and fro. Faint cheering was occasionally heard within the enemy's lines during night, and the shouts of the drivers proved that their artillery was in motion. On our right and centre, all was remarkably quiet; but on our left frequent picket-firing aroused the advanced posts, for the sentinels of both armies were extremely close, and ours, concealed in fields of standing corn, occupied all

our front down to the fence, where a small space of open fields intervened between our position and that of the Federal army.

As morning approached, many of our men sallied forth beyond the standing corn, to despoil the Federal dead; and this being perceived brought out the enemy's pickets, who opened a brisk and lively fire. It must be confessed the audacity of our men in this proceeding was beyond all precedent; for, in the woods immediately beyond, the enemy were in imposing force, and certainly flushed with their success of the previous evening.

A constant picket-firing on our left gave warning that the action would soon open, our troops rose long before day, and the most provident cooked themselves breakfast, and, smoking their pipes, sat in groups, chatting sociably, not knowing at what moment all would be summoned to "fall in." Soon simple picket-firing was succeeded by the roar of musketry; whole volleys occasionally broke upon the ear at different points of the line, which, together with the occasional roar of howitzers and rifled pieces, was more than enough to rouse the entire army. Commanders were busily engaged, and rode from place to place, with a business-like air; no hurry or confusion was visible; all seemed to look upon the matter with indifference and cheerfulness. Most of our troops had smelt powder long before, and they simply said, "Another day's work is before us," and tightly buckled their straps and belts, as if bound for a march, or a long fatiguing drill.

Fighting on our left now commenced in earnest;

troops which had been prowling about fields fronting the standing corn were seen to hasten their movements, and on came the Yankee line of battle in good order. Observing our clouds of skirmishers rapidly withdrawing from their front, and disappearing in the corn-fields, they gave loud cheers, and thought that little resistance would be offered until they had arrived at the top of the hill, or had found shelter in the woods. Their mistake was a grievous one. As the Federal line-of-battle reached the fence, up rose our men from their concealment among the corn, and delivered successive volleys right in the faces of their foes, who, surprised and staggering with loss, retreated back over the open ground, and were cut up fearfully by our batteries, which now opened with rapidity from our rear. So accurate was the fire that whole files of Federal soldiers lay dead, parallel with the fence.

Hundreds of shell from the enemy now dropped in all directions, making our position in the standing corn very unpleasant; and although we disputed their advance stubbornly, they gradually forced us back, until they penetrated into the corn-fields, which their heavy line of battle bent and broke, as they came sweeping onward with loud cheers. Supposing us to be beaten at this point, their commander lost no time, but seemed determined to push forward rapidly and smash our left wing. As brigade after brigade rushed gallantly forward, they were subjected to a continuous and galling fire; but no token was given of our strength in the dense timber, to which our

men now fell rapidly back, in skirmishing order. When the enemy had traversed the corn-fields, and reached the summit of the "rise," the ground slightly "dipped" towards the fence and road, so that our commanders in the woods had full view of the Federal force as it advanced. Every fence and every tree was made available by our sharpshooters, who constantly poured into their heavy masses a galling fire. Still onwards they came impetuously, and, from their hurried movements, were apparently breathless. Down went every fence in their path, as they rapidly crossed the road towards the woods, and lustily they cheered, as the last of our skirmishers disappeared from their front, and were lost in the dark, thick timber.

All was silence within our lines; regiments were lying flat on their faces with rifles cocked, and cautiously peered at the enemy as they came rushing into the woods in great masses, and with much noise. Suddenly, up rose Jackson's line of battle, the enemy halted, a moment of awful silence ensued, no man stirred, and then deafening, quick, accurate, and numerous volleys broke from our lines. The enemy were too thick to be missed; and, amid frightful loss and confusion, they broke and rushed forth from the woods, trembling like beings who had seen some dreadful apparition.

Soon as these fugitive masses had gained open ground, our batteries in rapid succession broke loose, belching forth grape and canister in such profusion that the infernal storm could be heard raining upon them with a hissing noise, and it literally ploughed furrows in the dark confused masses, so that daylight could be seen

through them at every discharge. Round shot bounded and bounced, and shells, after whizzing over head, dropped with loud explosions in the dark groups rushing through the corn-fields and dotting the landscape. The carnage was frightful. Through these fields the enemy (exulting in their success of the previous day) had come cheering in dense lines but a few moments before; they had swept from their front every man opposed to them, and had entered the woods with deafening shouts. They had not been lost to view many minutes ere they rushed back in confused, bleeding, staggering masses of human beings, without order, without officers, pursued by our lines of battle; rapidly our brave fellows pushed over the well-fought fields, and, amid showers of shell, kept close to the fleeing foe, and incessantly poured into their shattered ranks murderous volleys, which whistled through the corn, and peopled every acre with scores of dead.

Field officers of the enemy gallantly rode to the front, and endeavoured to rally their brigades. Reinforcements were seen approaching to their relief through open fields beyond; but onward pressed our victorious men, and did not halt until the foe was safely screened in their original position of the morning.\*

Fighting on the left had now lasted several hours — our men were thoroughly exhausted, and unable to advance farther upon the enemy. In truth, it would not have been wise to do so; for our present

---

\* This first attack had been opened on our left by Hooker's corps.

position for defence was preferable ground to any we could win. Cannonading now opened with great fury on both sides; and it was soon ascertained that the foe was largely reinforced, and beginning another advance.\* This they did in gallant style; but were met again by such a determined, withering fire, and their loss was so great, that no impression could be made upon our position; not only were they loth to follow us into the woods, but they were quickly beaten and demoralized in open ground. Constant volleys were now exchanged by both sides; and, as reinforcements arrived for Jackson, they were immediately thrown in front to withstand the third attack,† then organizing along the enemy's right, which was to be composed of all the commands there present.

The new line of the enemy seemed to be of immense strength; but as they came fully into view our artillery opened upon them with such rapidity and accuracy that great confusion and disorder began to reign ere they came sufficiently close to exchange shots with our infantry. Long and constant volleys resounded along our whole wing; both combatants were stationary; sometimes we slightly gave ground, and again recovered it, until at last our fire began to tell among the enemy; and it seemed that little was now required to drive them completely from the field. While indecision seemed to reign among Federal commanders, ours were unanimous for an advance; and, when the order was

---

\* The second advance was made by Sumner's corps.

† This was made by Mansfield's corps.



received, loud cheers and yells burst forth from all our troops, and the cannonade reopened with redoubled fury. The onset was furious, nothing seemed to withstand the impetuosity of our men; the enemy gradually withdrew from the open grounds in much confusion. Fresh divisions\* were hurried to the front to check our advance. The meeting was terrible, but the shock of short duration: beaten again and again, they were at last driven beyond the position originally occupied, when Hooker's attack began the previous afternoon.

Through woods and copse, across corn-fields, and ploughed fields, grassy slopes and meadows, over gullies, ditches, brooks, and fences, the combatants in this wing had contended since early morning, and their lines had advanced or retreated again and again, until it seemed that every acre of the landscape was strewn with dead. Tokens of carnage were visible on every hand; the woods were torn and shattered; the corn and grass were trodden under foot; outhouses and farmhouses were heaps of blazing ruins; while for miles, long lines of smoke ascended over the fertile valley, and numerous batteries uninterruptedly belched forth showers of shot and shell. Still the contending lines swayed and advanced, or broke and retreated, so that, to civilized beings, it seemed like some ghastly panorama of things transpiring in a nether world.

Jackson's impetuous advance at length halted. His men had far surpassed their olden fame; but it soon became apparent that weakness was enfeebling our

---

\* Sedgewick's corps.

efforts, and that without reinforcements we could not maintain the conquered ground, should any fresh body of the enemy assail us. Indications were not wanting to prove the enemy's activity, and the signal corps soon gave warning that fresh and heavy masses were concentrating and forming, to make a final effort to dislodge us from our advanced position. Soon the enemy appeared to our front again, and advanced with a steadiness which plainly indicated they had never yet pulled trigger during the day. The meeting was fierce, vindictive, and bitter; volleys were given and returned incessantly, their artillery slowly moved up to the front, and our line began to fall back with regularity and coolness. We would again retrace our steps, and invite them into the woods, where their first attacking corps had so suddenly melted away. Slowly we fell back, and still more cautiously did the enemy pursue. For some time the fight was maintained by us in open ground, and our superior fire inflicted great loss among them. Through the corn-fields once more we enticed the enemy onward, and boldly they advanced to try there again the fortune of war. Once within the timber our generals quickly prepared for their coming, and fell back some distance.

Forward still the enemy came over the numerous dead of their own army; but, ere they entered the woods, they opened a long and fierce cannonade, throwing hundreds of shell and round shot on those spots which we were supposed to occupy. Our men, however, having re-formed much farther back than at first, these missiles fell short; not a man of our line was

touched, but all lay quietly on their faces until daylight was shut out from our front by the dark massive lines of the enemy, who, slowly approaching, made the woods echo with their cheers. Cautiously they advanced, and single shots of sharpshooters resounded through the forest, as of solitary hunters in search of game. Moving forward up a gentle rise, their long lines came full in view, and instantly our artillery and infantry opened upon them with a deafening roar. Branches and leaves showered down on friend and foe alike; trees cracked, and bowed or toppled over, and fell with a crash among the enemy in low ground, and still volleys upon volleys whistled through the cover, until it seemed as if the clouds had opened and rained down showers of bullets. The smoke, confusion, dust, and noise were indescribable; and how long the fierce conflict lasted I knew not, but it seemed to me an age.

Bravely had the enemy assailed us, and gallantly were they repulsed. Jackson could not be moved, but held his ground; and, taking advantage of apparent indecision and mystification, gave the word to advance, and this, the fifth corps sent against him, was hurled bleeding, staggering, and defeated from his front, and retreated from the timber with great loss.

But Jackson was too weak to attempt another advance, and was content to hold the enemy in check until positive information could be ascertained of McClellan's operations on other parts of our lines.

It was now past noon. The conflict had raged with

varying fortune on our left, but from the general line of fire visible over the landscape it was evident we had not lost ground, and could not be dislodged from the position our leaders had selected. At the centre, heavy cannonading was going on, which in many instances was disastrous to our wounded, for the enemy's missiles flying high, coursed over our line, and fell in the village of Sharpsburg, or caused much distress to our ambulance trains. Groups of officers towards the left had been for several hours anxiously watching the development of the Federal attack, but now that the heaviest firing had ceased, and the action seemed to dwindle down into a cannonade, they returned to the centre and right, apparently well pleased with the aspect of affairs, and judged that M'Clellan would next attempt to feel or force our other wing. Every hillock commanding a view of the battle-field was dotted with mounted officers, who smiled as they looked to the left, and said, "Jackson bravely maintains the ground. They cannot force him from his position; he holds on to it like grim death!" "Yes," said another, sitting sideways in his saddle, and smoking a cigar, "and here are we doing nothing. By Jove, the cannonade is becoming heavy on the right! See their troops yonder moving forward! *Our* turn comes next. Gentlemen, every man to his post!" and the group of officers broke up as each galloped off to his command.

For miles over these beautiful fields the smoke of battle curled away in snow-white clouds. The roar of artillery was regular and slow, while the patter of distant musketry, and the sharp, ringing, crackling noise of rifle

volleys kept every sense alive to the dreadful work transpiring on all sides. Patches of wood up and down the lines were filled with smoke; bright flashes from hill and hollow shot forth in all directions; lines were seen to form and advance, others to waver and break; banners rose and fell, the bright flash of bayonets and the stream of fire, all too plainly told of deathly strife on every acre of the scene.

It was now near four o'clock, and all felt anxious for the end to come. The better informed felt certain that another attack was intended, but whether M'Clellan would hurl his hosts at our centre or right none could tell. The doubt was soon set at rest. Heavy infantry firing burst forth towards the lower bridge, upon which several of our batteries in cannonading position opened with great energy and fury. The enemy's artillery replied, and the firing became general. Gradually falling back, our infantry moved through the open fields, delivering volleys as they retreated, and enticed the enemy up the rising ground, on top of which our artillery was posted. Fast as they crossed the bridge, shot and shell assailed them, until it seemed as if the passage was literally blocked up with heaps of dead. Our round shot, striking the heavy stonework of the bridge, knocked out fragments in all directions, while shells fell thick and fast, exploding among their advancing columns.

Gradually retiring, our infantry re-formed in woods to the rear of artillery, and seemed desirous of enticing the enemy still onwards. Forward they came, and gallantly; their force was very great, and it suffered

much from our active batteries, which limbered and retired towards the woods, but ever maintained a fierce fire upon the heads of their columns. As soon, however, as the enemy had ascended the "rise" from the bridge, and come within full view of our force drawn up near the woods, incessant volleys assailed their line of battle, and it began to melt away. The storm of shot and shell which met the Federal advance was awful. Every imaginable spot was alive and swarming with combatants. Reinforcements had arrived, and rushed into the fray with loud cheers, so that the dark woods seemed filled with men where none had been before. The Federal advance was arrested; their leading regiments had been literally blown to pieces, and although succour was momentarily arriving, it only served to fill up the fearful gaps everywhere visible in their line. For some short time the battle raged with great fury, and although hard pressed, the enemy would not yield his ground; but when our artillery had opened at shorter distance, and our infantry advanced to closer quarters, their line began to fall back, and our men followed over heaps of lifeless and mangled carcases.

- But while this deafening cannonade continued on our right, and the enemy were being slowly driven back to the bridge, we could distinctly hear heavy artillery practice to our left, which informed us that the attack had been renewed in that quarter, and that Jackson was, as usual, full of business. The whole line of battle seemed to have gained new life and animation, and both sides were fighting earnestly and with vigour.

The engagement could not last long, for the sun was fast sinking, and if the enemy meant to achieve something great, it was time for M'Clellan to have commenced. Nothing of moment occurred at our centre ; both wings were seriously engaged, Jackson on the left was immovable, and Longstreet on our right was gradually driving the enemy towards the bridge. The carnage here was frightful, and as our shot and shell plunged into their retreating ranks, the whole vicinity of the bridge seemed strewn with bodies, horses, waggons, and artillery.

Both attacks of the enemy upon our wings had failed, and they had been repulsed with fearful slaughter. Franklin, Sumner, Hooker, Mansfield, and other corps commanders on their right, had been fought to a standstill. They were exhausted and powerless. Burnside, on their left, had been fearfully handled by Longstreet, and was driven in confusion upon the bridge, which he held with a few cannon, and suffered every moment from our batteries on rising ground. We did not desire the bridge, or it might have been held from the beginning, and, save a desultory cannonade, the enemy were now inactive and exhausted. When the sun sank all felt infinite relief from the fatigue and dangers of the day, and although it could not be said we had gained a battle, we certainly could boast of having defeated our enemy's plan throughout the entire day, and though inferior in force, had frequently hurled them back upon their original position with frightful loss.

Every one imagined that the struggle would be resumed on the morrow, and our lines sank to rest upon

the ground, with the dead and dying around them. Many of the men prowled about, picking up various articles from the Federal dead, while burying parties were hard at work, and ambulances engaged in removing the wounded. Sharpsburg itself was one entire hospital, and the inhabitants assisted our wounded with much tenderness and care. Every house and every cottage had some afflicted tenant; but all our men bore up under their sufferings with that unflinching fortitude which has ever characterized them throughout the war.

The night passed wearily by. Camp-fires burned brightly, but quietness reigned throughout the lines undisturbed by any demonstration of the enemy. Friends met friends around the fires, and spoke of dangers past. This officer was reported dead and that one wounded; one had lost his leg, another his arm; Colonel Smith had been blown to pieces, and General Jones desperately hurt; shells had exploded in the midst of a general's staff and disabled every man; hats and coats had been perforated, and no one could move twenty paces without seeing many with heads or arms bandaged, or, pipe in mouth, limping to the rear. In one place, a youth was lying near a camp-fire dying, the embers lighting up his pallid features as he opened his eyes and kissed a brother kneeling by his side. Now, I met half-a-dozen stalwart men, bearing their wounded and moaning colonel to an ambulance. Again, I passed a group of busy surgeons, cutting and probing their dumb patients; now couriers and orderlies dashed furiously by; a general and his staff



slowly trotted off in one direction, regiments and batteries passed on in another. All the horrible sights of a battle-field were frequent and heartrending, while groans reached the ear from every barn and every house, and through the whole length and breadth of the woods. Preparations were still going on for a renewal of the conflict on the morrow, should the enemy force it; but in my inmost heart I hoped and prayed that Providence might postpone it, for our own men were thoroughly exhausted with long marches and hard fighting, and lay upon the ground in battle-line as helpless and quiet as children.

The morning broke, and all was bustle and preparation, but the enemy moved not. Smoke from camp-fires slowly ascended in all directions, and their ambulances, like ours, were creeping over the scene in sad procession. Still we knew not at what moment the dark masses of the foe might again appear; it was cause for rejoicing when it was whispered that preparations were already progressing for our retreat, and that all the waggons had gone up the river towards Williamsport.

The next day passed without anything of moment transpiring, and during night the bulk of our troops began to retreat, but with great coolness and order. Jackson was entrusted with the rear-guard, and next morning (19th) the last of our regiments withdrew from the scene without hindrance or molestation. Some cavalry encounters occurred, it is true, but not of such importance as to retard our movements; and save a few shots occasionally exchanged with our rear-guard,

nothing indicated that the enemy were in such "hot" pursuit as their official telegrams subsequently stated. The retreat was slow, orderly, and unmolested. Jackson conducted it; and his dispositions were so skilfully made that they fairly defied any effort the enemy might make to inflict loss or make captures. It cannot be denied that large numbers of dead and wounded were left behind to the tender mercies of the foe, but all who could be removed were carefully provided for, and safely conveyed into Virginia. Save some half-dozen disabled cannon or caissons, and a few arms, little was left in the enemy's hands of which they could truthfully boast.\*

---

\* Being on the defensive, our loss was much less than that of the enemy, who, in attacking, advanced over open ground, and were much exposed to our accurate fire. From the best sources of information, I learn that our killed and wounded amounted to 8,000, exclusive of a few prisoners; 1,000 of our wounded were left behind, and a convention entered into for the burial of the dead. It has been stated by Northern journals that we lost 30,000 in all, but this is pure fiction. Among our losses in this engagement were General Starb and Brigadier-General Branch killed; Brigadier-Generals Anderson, Wright, Lawton, Armsted, Ripley, Ransom, and Jones, wounded. I learn that during the thirty hours, or more, which intervened between the engagement and our retreat, little was left upon the battle-field in cannon or arms, but everything worth attention was carried off. Although the enemy claim to have captured thousands of arms and dozens of cannon, I need not add that this, for the most part, was all imagination.

McClellan's loss has been placed at 12,000 killed, wounded, and missing; and I think the estimate below reality. Among his killed were Generals Mansfield, Richardson, Hartsuff, and others; and among a fearful list of generals wounded were Sumner, Haeker, Meagher, Dureya, Max Weber, Dana, Sedgewick, French, Ricketts, Rodman, and others.

It is almost unnecessary for me to say that McClellan claimed this battle as "a great victory" for the Union cause, but did not do so until fully assured of our retreat into Virginia. Why his boastful despatch to

Jackson managed the retreat so skilfully that the enemy were completely unaware of the destination of our forces. Save a few shots exchanged on either side, nothing of moment occurred; and our whole army was established on the south bank ere the Federals had positive knowledge of the movement.\* On the 20th, however, their army began to move—FitzJohn Porter taking the advance, who judged, from the extremely quiet look of all things on the Virginia shore, that we were far inland. Barnes's brigade of Pennsylvanians, supported by one of "regulars," under chief command of General Sykes, moved towards the river, and forded the stream at Boteler's Mills. Heavy guns were planted on the Maryland shore to cover their crossing.

Jackson had felt certain that the enemy would attempt to pursue, and he made no display of force

---

Washington was not penned *before* our retreat from Sharpsburg is evidence sufficient to show that he still feared, and would not shout "until he was out of the woods." In truth, the Northern press acknowledged that with an inferior force we had thrashed them to a stand-still; so much so, that M'Clellan could only muster two regiments of infantry with two guns to follow in pursuit, and was not aware of our departure until many hours after we retreated. It was called an "indecisive battle" by M'Clellan's warmest partisans, and many said "it required another engagement to decide Federal superiority."

\* When M'Clellan heard of our backward movement on the 19th, he telegraphed to Washington:—"I do not know if the enemy is falling back to an interior position, or recrossing the river. We may safely claim the victory as ours." He did not assert this until more than thirty hours had elapsed subsequent to the engagement at Sharpsburg! Some few hours after the above telegram, he consoled the authorities at Washington by saying—"Our victory is complete! The enemy is driven (?) back into Virginia. Maryland and Pennsylvania are now safe!" Again he added:—"The Confederates succeeded in crossing the Potomac on Friday morning with all their transports and wounded, except some three hundred of the latter!"

likely to intimidate them. The passage of the river was undisputed, except by a few small field-pieces; and when they had landed in Virginia, our gunners took flight in apparent trepidation. The enemy quickly perceived this movement, and imagining that our forces were demoralized, they rushed forward with much cheering. The division of Ambrose Hill, however, was cleverly concealed from view: and when the enemy had advanced sufficiently far, several of our batteries opened upon them, and Hill's troops attacking in front and flank, unceremoniously began the work of slaughter. Their surprise, confusion, and loss were so great, and effected so quickly, that they rushed back towards the river in great haste; but such was the impatience and ardour of our men that scarcely one of the Pennsylvania brigade escaped death or capture. The stream was literally blocked up with dead, and although the enemy maintained a heavy cannonade upon us, it could not restrain the impetuosity and rapidity of our attack.

Leaving heaps of slain behind, and unheeding the constant cannonade maintained from Maryland, our forces withdrew towards the Opequan, and drew up in line of battle on the west side of it, our left extending to Williamsport and the Potomac. Although we were in battle array many days in anxious expectation, the Federals remained quiet in Maryland, and made no attempts to disturb us. A large mass of our troops had gone up the Valley towards Winchester, and halted there, and by degrees the whole army followed in the same direction, carefully carting and conveying

away everything that could be of use ; so that large part of the harvests recently gathered fell into the hands of our commissaries and quartermasters, thus leaving the whole country once again barren of supplies for any pursuing force.

The only episode which enlivened our monotonous inactivity was a cavalry engagement (October 2) between a small detachment of Stuart's command and a heavy force under Pleasanton. The enemy were very desirous of ascertaining our whereabouts and strength ; and for this purpose a considerable number of cavalry and twelve pieces of artillery crossed the stream near Shepherdstown, and advanced up towards our lines. They were met by FitzHugh Lee, and sharp fighting ensued ; but the latter, being overpowered, bravely maintained the combat, and sent for reinforcements. Stuart was immediately in the saddle, and swooping down upon Pleasanton, with a fresh force, drove that commander from the field, and pursued him to within a short distance of Shepherdstown, where a large force of the enemy were then stationed. This cavalry encounter was a smart affair, and conducted by both leaders with marked ability. Had not darkness ensued our captures would have proved considerable, as the Federals were completely routed, and their rear-guard dispersed in much confusion long ere they reached Shepherdstown.

Northern newspapers made such boast regarding the battle of Sharpsburg and of the "rebel rout" that their fervid imaginings caused much amusement and ridicule among our men, who by long experience had become

accustomed to the falsity of their official statements; so that when we daily read their loud bellowings and ecstatic glorifications about "30,000 rebels killed and wounded, thousands of prisoners, and immense spoil," &c., we could but smile, and despise their mendacity even more than ever.\* "Every rebel had been driven from Maryland and Pennsylvania," we were informed, and "our hosts lay trembling at their feet," whenever M'Clellan should give the order to march; yet while their faces were radiant with joy, and stump orators expanded their jaws in rhapsodical orations of self-laudation, the whole country was suddenly awe-struck at the audacity of Stuart.

Selecting 1,200 from the best-mounted men of his division (October 10), Stuart crossed the Potomac, and without hindrance made a bold push for Pennsylvania, in M'Clellan's rear. In truth, he had been engaged in appropriating or destroying vast amounts of Federal property for over twenty-four hours ere the foe believed the report to be more than rumour; and then M'Clellan coolly informed the nation that it "need not be alarmed, his whole cavalry force was on the move in pursuit," that "Stuart and his command would be killed or captured within a few hours, for it was impossible to

---

\* M'Clellan says in his official despatch:—"We lost 2,010 killed, 9,416 wounded, and 1,043 missing. In killed, wounded, and prisoners, it may be safely estimated that the enemy lost 30,000 of their best troops." This, of course, is erroneous; but a general who cannot positively state whether he is victorious or defeated until his enemy has retreated some fifty hours subsequent to an engagement, may be "safely" allowed a broad margin for his fevered and excited imagination.

escape through the trap prepared for them." Stuart's movements were rapid, indeed, and the amount of arms and stores destroyed on his route was very great. At Chambersburg were large depôts of clothing, shoes, blankets, harness, and many horses, brought by railway for M'Clellan's army, and of which it stood greatly in need. All needful supplies were taken by our men, and the rest destroyed.

The consternation among the inhabitants of the several towns and villages in Stuart's route was laughable indeed: all military men were paroled; all horses and mules were seized for our service, but no injury done or appropriation made of any other species of private property. Pompous mayors of towns, with goose-like processions of sleek aldermen, or bilberry-nosed politicians of snug little villages, who shortly before had astonished the ears of groundlings with spasmodic bursts of patriotic eloquence, now meekly came forth to meet Stuart's troopers, with ludicrous gait and manner. It was certain, however, that M'Clellan and his whole army were on the alert; and as the telegraph had informed him of our route and strength, none doubted that the enemy would make strenuous exertions to watch the roads and guard every ford between Washington and Shepherdstown. When Stuart had proceeded as far as Gettysburg, some imagined he would return; but crossing the Monocacy, he rapidly pushed down its east bank, and, during night, successfully passed large detachments of troops on M'Clellan's left wing.

Every highway and by-path in this part of Maryland

was minutely known to Stuart, who now stole through the country around Poolesville, and directed his course towards Edward's Ferry, a few miles from Leesburg. To screen the true number of his force, and distract the enemy's attention, his command was divided into several parties, which sought the river at various points and crossed by different fords. The Federal plans became confused from various conflicting statements brought by their scouts and spies, so that ere they had determined upon any settled plan of action, Stuart had crossed the Potomac with his booty, and without the loss of a man, at the same time bringing away more than 600 mules and horses, laden with all manner of supplies. It might be said with truth that he had fully remounted his whole command while on the raid, besides the 600 animals heavily burdened with clothing, arms, and except a few shots exchanged with the disappointed enemy, who arrived at the river's edge in time to witness our triumphant crossing, this, the second of Stuart's grand tours of inspection round M'Clellan's lines, was effected without the expenditure of powder, and left their whole army in senseless astonishment at the audacity and success of our dashing troopers. For nearly three days they had been burning and seizing without let or hindrance, and had travelled more than a hundred miles around the enemy, baffling telegrams, plans, scouts, spies, generals, and thousands of travel-stained and jaded cavalry.



## CHAPTER XIX.

M'Clellan again invades Virginia—Sigel is pushed forward from Washington, and takes Position at Manassas—The Federal main Army moves East of the Blue Ridge, and has Head-quarters at Warrenton—Lee marches in a parallel Line through the Shenandoah Valley—Surprise and Flight of Sigel upon the appearance of Confederate Cavalry—Change of Federal Commanders—Rapid March of the Federals to the Rappahannock—Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13th.

How long M'Clellan would remain motionless in Maryland, or what caused his inaction, were to the many an insoluble problem. Although the daily demand of the Northern journals was for an immediate "on to Richmond" movement, the enemy seemed to be exceedingly loth to place foot again on Virginian soil. The Southern army was represented to be greatly demoralized by the "splendid and glorious" victory of Antietam; nevertheless, the Northern leaders in the field betrayed the greatest caution, and endeavoured to surprise General Lee by every artifice which cunning could suggest. Southern generals, however, could not be hoodwinked; their eyes and ears were open to every movement; and they were accurately informed of all that transpired within M'Clellan's camp. How this information was obtained, or by whom, must ever remain profound

mysteries to me; yet I confess the daily programme of Federal movements was as freely discussed by groups of officers at camp-fires round Winchester as they could have been in the large invading army of Maryland.

Winchester was our pivot-point—whether for offensive or defensive operations—in the Valley; and had the enemy advanced up the Shenandoah, I see nothing in the world which could have prevented us from defeating them either *en masse* or in detail; for the ground from Bunker Hill near Charlestown, to and beyond Winchester and Strasburg, was admirably adapted for defence. At the latter place, Lee could have assumed a position which, fortified as he alone knows how, might have defied the best and most numerous armies in the world. M'Clellan was shrewd, and fully alive to the difficulties of that route; he had no supplies at hand in such a region, and could not be regularly served by his trains over a deserted and mountainous country. More than this, the possession of Winchester gave opportunities for Lee to pass between him and Washington.

Having again fortified Harper's Ferry, the Federal army poured into Virginia, and took up their line of march east of the Blue Ridge; thus always presenting front to Lee, who in a parallel line slowly proceeded up the Valley, carefully watching any weakness in their front through which he could break and disjoint it. Both generals were looking into each other's eyes; but M'Clellan might have gazed for ever, and never divined anything flitting across the mind of the calm-faced,

smiling, modest, and unpretending visage of Lee. His face was a blank—all pallor and thought: but not a wrinkle, flush, twitch, or motion of the eye, gave the remotest idea of his thoughts and intentions. He passed from point to point without ostentation or show; his movements were quiet, undemonstrative, and calm: whether commanding generals or listening to couriers, he was the same as he had ever been—an impenetrable block of marble.

M'Clellan's movements seemed to indicate that indecision ruled in his councils. Sometimes there were tokens of an advance; then again a few days would suffice to dispel such conjectures, and warrant ideas of his speedy retreat; thus it was not until his headquarters had been fully established at Warrenton, that we became sanguine and positive of his timidity. The Federal army was much larger than ours, and furnished with supplies beyond anything hitherto imagined in warfare; nor had its chief commenced his march, despite the blusterings and anathemas of quill-valiant editors, until fully and superabundantly reinforced and equipped.

Some time before his own advance, M'Clellan had pushed Sigel forward from Washington to Manassas Junction, with a reported force of 30,000 men, but these were said to be levies and unreliable. Railroad communication was once again perfected from Alexandria to Warrenton, and it soon became palpable that as the main army was massed round the latter place, we might look to that point for indications of future movements. Whatever the intentions of Federal generals

in their choice of routes, it was evident that the main object in view was the surprise and capture of Richmond by every possible means; but it was also clear that to accomplish this the enemy must cross the Rappahannock at *some* point, so that our generals in the Valley held their troops well together for instant movement, nor was there anything neglected in our arrangements which could in any manner facilitate the rapid concentration of forces at various points.

Longstreet's corps was clustered at the mouth of the Valley, ready to take position at any point behind the Rappahannock. Daily drill was incessant and severe, discipline was at its highest pitch, and reviews were not unfrequent among the various brigades and divisions. At no period of the war were we more confident and gay: extensive appropriations and purchases during our brief sojourn in Maryland and on the Pennsylvania Border had replenished our stores to such a degree, and Government had been so active meanwhile in manufacturing uniforms and the like, that we scarcely knew ourselves; we were now so good-looking and comfortable, that we smiled to think how many of our former friends would mistake us for gentlemen! Slowly our army crept up to the mouth of the Valley, and equally slowly were M'Clellan's forces gathered around him at Warrenton.

September and October had passed without any demonstration of moment from the enemy, and now cold, bleak November whistled over the fields and mountains of Virginia. The army began to imagine that winter-quarters were intended, but from the temper

of the Northern journals received in camp, it was plain that movements of some kind would be forced upon M'Clellan. About the 10th of November, unusual activity among the enemy occasioned more than ordinary vigilance with our outposts; and, to the astonishment of every one, a Federal deserter informed our guard of M'Clellan's dismissal, and of the appointment of Burnside as chief in command, adding, that their forces were almost upon the point of open mutiny in consequence.

Although this was fresh news to us, our generals smiled, having evidently known the fact long before our advanced posts. They well understood that M'Clellan had been superseded through political jealousy, on the plea of apparent inaction, and, consequently, that the new commander would be expected to march against us forthwith, to satisfy the universal clamour of the North, even should their army and journals reap nought but defeat and disgrace from such a movement. But even *that* was something! it was food for "sensation;" illustrated journals could luxuriate in bloodthirsty woodcuts, to please the million; other favourites would be forthwith installed in place; and an endless batch of fresh commissions and army contracts be issued for the delectation and emolument of office-holders or political partisans. All this was something, and fully appreciated by our commanders, who complacently smoked, and tightened the reins of discipline among us even more than ever.

On the 13th there was proof positive that grand movements were transpiring within the enemy's lines,

and it became generally known that Burnside was breaking up camps, and proceeding to the lower Rappahannock. Many argued that such a change of base was commendable in the Federal chief; for his depôts, at Acquia Creek, could be supplied by transports, and stores conveyed inland by railway running from that point to Fredericksburg. Whether he wished to force a passage over the river at Fredericksburg, or merely intended to prepare for winter-quarters, were matters of some speculation.

Burnside's movements, however, were no secret to our leaders; for Longstreet's corps immediately marched to Fredericksburg, and arrived there before any large body of the enemy had appeared. It is true that the Stafford Heights, on the north bank of the river, were held by a Federal detachment many days ere the approach of their main army, but they had never attempted to cross over into the town. Picket-firing was constant along the river; but despite all this waste of powder, there were many who sincerely believed that Burnside had no serious intention of attacking, regarding this movement as a harmless display of force to divert our attention from his real designs. On the 17th, however, all surmise was banished from our minds. General Sumner appeared before the place, and demanded its immediate surrender. The mayor politely refused to recognize such a demand; and the town being filled with our troops, the municipal authorities were extremely valiant on the occasion, and apostrophized Jupiter and all the gods in fine style. Women and children, for the most part, were conveyed

from town, and active preparations set on foot for fiercely disputing the passage of the river, by the construction of field-works on the hills and bluffs which ran parallel with the stream south of the city. All was done in secrecy, however; and, from the apparent quietness of our lines, the enemy were unable to form any conjectures of our position and force.

The left wing under Jackson had not arrived, though it was rapidly pushing towards us; yet ascertaining that Sigel still held his corps at Manassas, and had not moved nearer to Burnside, Jackson sent a strong force of cavalry to reconnoitre, and their appearance filled the enemy with so much dismay that they instantly broke up camps and fled in disorder to Washington. It was supposed that this cavalry detachment was Jackson's advance-guard, and that we were endeavouring to get between them and the capital, as of old. Whatever their ideas, the retreat was a most hurried and disgraceful affair; whole regiments threw down their arms and rushed towards Alexandria post haste, shouting, "Jackson is coming! he is again in our rear!—Old Stonewall, with 100,000 men, is marching on Washington!"

On the 21st, Burnside personally demanded a surrender of the town, and threatened to bombard it in case of refusal. The threat was treated with the contempt it deserved, and every non-combatant was ordered from the place. It was now daily expected that the enemy would make some desperate attempt at crossing in face of all opposition; yet day followed day until November had passed, and still no signs of Federal movements.

Our position at Fredericksburg was admirably chosen. We were posted on a range of hills which more or less extended from a bend of the river on our left to some six miles, and across the Massaponax River, which ran at right angles with the Rappahannock, and formed the right of our lines. In truth, it might be said that the landscape from these hills to the river was like an amphitheatre; the intrenched Confederates having all the boxes, the stage being the valley in which is placed the red-brick town of Fredericksburg. The Rappahannock is seen to run above and below the place; and, except a few houses scattered here and there over the scene, there is nothing to relieve the eye from the bleak, dry, cold, frosty, and windy aspect of the whole. All the woods are leafless, and the cold dry branches rattle in the piercing winds like skeletons in chains. Few fires are seen to burn in Fredericksburg, and smoke ascends but seldom. Our men are quartered in deserted houses, and keep vigilant guard along the river bank, both night and day; and, although piercing winds, and sleet and rain, prevail, the active picket walks his post, and none can move without being sharply challenged. The men have dug pits along the river to conceal themselves under fire and for shelter. The enemy have done the same; and it is so cold and dreary that none can imagine any general would have the heart to move troops in weather like this, when guards have frequently been found frozen and dead at their post.

The enemy's position and strength are also concealed; and they likewise can look down into the town from the Stafford Heights, and could destroy it in ten minutes



with the formidable array of guns and batteries which overlook and are pointed at it. During cold frosty nights, we can hear their trains running from Acquia Creek, and they can hear ours also ; for guns of heavy calibre and all munitions of war are being rapidly brought to the front from Richmond ; and every hill commanding a view of the valley at our feet is swept by cannon, but so concealed by undergrowth, woods, or undulations, that the enemy cannot detect them.

The hills to our extreme left, near a bend of the river, are crowned by the residence of Dr. Taylor ; to the right of these a road runs from Fredericksburg to the Wilderness and Chancellorsville ; to the right of this road rise Stansbury Hill, and several others ; to the right of these runs a plank road leading from the centre of the town through our left centre ; to the right of this is the enceinte called Marye's Hill. Hazel Creek runs between this latter position and Lee's Hill, which, from its altitude, was selected for head-quarters.

The Richmond railway divided our left under Longstreet from our right under Jackson, the latter being strongly posted on a series of hills and well fortified ; the extreme right and right flank being in charge of Stuart. The force of Longstreet on the left included the divisions of Ransom, M'Laws, and Pickett, Anderson being on Marye's Hill ; Cobb being posted behind a strong stone wall at the right base of the latter, commanding all approach up the open lands of the Hazel Creek, while Hood and others filled up the space to the railroad where our right commenced under Ambrose Hill,

Early, and others, up to Stuart, who, with his mounted division, light artillery, and infantry, held the extreme right and right flank. D. H. Hill was held in reserve. Heavy batteries protected our extremes, right and left. The Washington artillery corps was detailed for special duty at Marye's and Lee's Hills, and Colonel Walker was posted on our right.

The distance of the enceinte from town was not more than four or five hundred yards. Other places on the right and left of our lines were a considerable distance from it and the river; but in the more exposed positions nearest town, long lines of breast-works had been dug, behind which our men could be admirably posted when necessity demanded it. In truth, the position, though naturally strong, had been carefully improved by our indefatigable engineers, and batteries were numerous at all points; so that, with our army of 80,000, we could complacently remain undemonstrative until the enemy should foolishly advance. Pickets from various brigades were scattered up and down the river, Barksdale's Mississippi troops occupying the town. Cavalry patrols were frequent at all points of the river closely watching the enemy, who, down the stream at Hamilton's Crossing, were particularly busy, as if preparing to force a passage. From the latter point, a road leads round to the rear of our right, and others running south of the town passed through its centre; so that much attention was paid to the enemy's manœuvres, for the threatened attack in this quarter was the most practicable and scientific they could have selected.

Notwithstanding frequent demonstrations it was evident the enemy were disinclined to move; a tardiness which very much surprised us, as Burnside's sudden and rapid change of base from Warrenton had led many to believe that his movements generally would be expeditious. As this state of inaction was distasteful to our leaders, and particularly so to Stuart and his restless brigadiers, cavalry frequently crossed the river, and made annoying incursions upon the Federal rear, and effected all manner of captures without hindrance from the enemy. On the 28th of November cavalry crossed by one of the upper fords and captured several squadrons of Pennsylvania horse on duty at the outposts, and did not lose a man; for the foe meekly surrendered without making the shadow of resistance. FitzHugh Lee and Hampton also frequently distinguished themselves; and, operating on the enemy's line of supply, dashed into Dumfries and other places, dispersing the guards, and making a clean sweep of everything; so that, from our constant boldness, the enemy were bewildered, and knew not on which flank to look for Stuart's ubiquitous troopers; for they were successively here, there, and everywhere, burning, capturing, annoying, or fighting, and, by their activity and nerve, seemed to magnify their numbers tenfold.

The first week in cold, bleak December had passed over our cheerless lines, and every expedient was resorted to by our troops to keep themselves warm. Wood was scarce to the front in many places, and our men on duty could be seen blowing their fingers and

holding conversation with Federal guards;\* but, on the 9th and 10th, unusual activity seemed to prevail on the Stafford Heights, and outposts brought in word that during the night heavy waggon-trains could be heard moving, and the noise and cursing of teamsters whipping their horses, mules, and oxen, were very frequent immediately opposite the town. This was explained when, on the 11th, as soon as the fog lifted, our men in town espied large numbers of the enemy engaged in constructing pontoon bridges, and immediately opened upon them a galling and destructive fire. From their screened position, it was impossible to touch our men with gun-shot or rifle, for they were scattered in all directions, in houses, barns, and every imaginable place where shelter could be obtained. The incessant fusillade so annoyed the enemy as to cause the total suspension of their bridge-building; and, at last, several field-pieces were brought to bear upon us for some time, and our sharpshooters desisted.

---

\* Amusing conversations frequently occurred between outposts on the river banks:—

“How are you, rebels?” asked a Yankee, one cold morning, blowing his fingers.

“Oh, not very good to-day,” was the reply. “We have suffered an awful loss! Jackson has resigned!”

“Jackson resigned!” was the astonished exclamation in rejoinder. “Why, how was that?” asked the Federals, who greatly feared the very name of old Stonewall.

“Oh, he resigned because they removed his commissary-general, and he wouldn’t stand it.”

“His commissary-general, eh? Then who was he?” they inquired, in much surprise.

“Banks!” was the significant reply.

The sarcasm was well applied, and so acutely felt by the enemy, that they immediately opened fire from pure vexation.

Taking advantage of this, bridge-building was commenced again, and swarms of the enemy could be seen like magnified ants moving to and fro with beams and boats, and a thousand etceteras required in their unpleasant undertaking. Our sharpshooters recommenced their fire, and the enemy retired. Vexed and annoyed at our impudence and pertinacity, they pointed more than a hundred guns at the town, and commenced an earth-shaking cannonade; the smoke and flame from their pieces on the Stafford Heights were so great that it seemed as if the earth was vomiting forth sulphurous lava. Houses fell, timbers crashed, dust rose, flames ascended, and, from our position as spectators in the boxes of this amphitheatre, it seemed as if we were innocently gazing at some noisy and smoky episode of Napoleon's wars, as often represented on the French stage. The whole town seemed alive: one ran here, another there. Unlucky citizens, who remained too long, or had screened themselves in hopes of the enemy's speedy arrival, now came forth from their hiding places, and not a few Dutch Jews were observed panting under heavy loads of tobacco, which they had secreted. Shells of every size and form were screaming and whizzing through the air, and their explosion was always attended by a sudden uprising of beams, dust, doors, chairs, bedsteads, and the like, until at last the place looked like a vast broker's shop, filled with odds and ends of things indescribable.

How our valiant pickets fared during this terrific visitation, I know not; they scorned to retreat, and still maintained an accurate fire. It was not until a large

Federal infantry force had crossed above and below town that they withdrew from their covert of smoking and burning ruins.

Lee seemed perfectly satisfied with the aspect of affairs. Burnside was constructing several bridges under cover of the town, in which they hoped to conceal any force that crossed. Franklin on their left was similarly engaged near the mouth of the Massaponax; and Sumner was above town near Falmouth, busy in the same occupation. We could not successfully prevent the construction of these bridges—those at Fredericksburg itself were the most numerous and important, but perfectly hidden from our view by the town; and it is possible, judging from his inactivity, that Lee was not desirous of molesting their labours, but too happy indeed to see them perfectly unconscious of the coming storm.

During the 11th and 12th the enemy were rapidly crossing at the various bridges; and we could see them marshalling their hosts in the valley. Franklin's wing had first crossed, and proceeded to form line parallel with the stream; his left in full force close to the Massaponax, and his right beyond Deep Run Brook. Beyond this point to, and in front of the town, no troops appeared in numbers. The Federal right, under Sumner, had crossed at and above the town by several bridges, and its left rested close to the city; so that the entire left and right of the Federal army were plainly in view, in columns or deployed; but in the centre, opposite to our enceinte of Marye's Hill, no troops appeared, though it was evident that Fredericks-

burg literally swarmed with them; and that a few well-directed shells could have caused the instant and noisy upheaving of the whole living, motionless mass concealed there. Federal dispositions continued without hindrance on our part. Our front was very quiet and unpretending, and, as we peered over breastworks or peeped from long lines of rifle-pits at the dark lines wheeling and marching in open ground, we could not but confess that their generals should be capable of accomplishing something astonishing with such a host as that, supported and covered as it was by numberless batteries on the hills and bluffs behind.

Strict and vigilant guards were numerously posted at all points down in the valley during night, and they occasionally heard the Federal countersigns exchanged; but the greatest secrecy marked the conduct of our cavalry at the mouth of the Massaponax, for it was uncertain what Franklin might attempt under cover of the night, as his force was apparently very large, and so stationed as to be able to take up the line of march to our right rear, should it have been determined to open the engagement in that manner.

The morning of Dec. 13 dawned, and all was feverish expectation. Noises from the valley and loud-toned commands told of Federal leaders marching and counter-marching in the fog and mists. None now doubted the certainty of battle, but prepared for it with calmness and determination. The rattle of picket-firing on our right gave tokens of the prelude, and all desired that the sun would lift the foggy veil from the valley. Between nine and ten o'clock the view was clear, and there

stood our enemies, right, left, and centre, just upon the point of moving. Couriers, generals, and aides were prancing and dashing about in the valley, and as our mounted men raced to and fro in hot haste to our rear, they would turn a hasty glance at the imposing scene below and hurry onwards. The report of artillery on our right, and the rattle of rifles, told of an engagement, which increased in intensity every moment. Batteries on Stafford Heights opened on our left and centre, and numerous shells were screaming and bursting in all directions around the base of Marye's and Lee's Hills. Our guns replied coolly and deliberately, and hostile shot and shell coursed to and fro overhead, throwing up columns and clouds of dust wherever they fell. The Federal right, under Sumner, was the especial and favourite object of all our cannoniers, and (as an artillery officer coolly observed) our shell fell and burst "beautifully" among their closely-packed brigades. I have heard of, and seen, "daylight" let through an approaching column, but never, until at Fredericksburg, did I see complete "lanes" ploughed out of human bodies.

It was now near noon, and the crash of musketry to our right told that Jackson and his wing were fully engaged, and, as usual, repulsing the enemy at every point; but the threatening aspect of the foe at our centre and left drew the attention of all to those quarters.

The cannonade from Stafford Heights had now increased to such a pitch of fury that none doubted its object. Their attacking columns began to move, and moments seemed like ages of suspense. Our fire had



been feeble, but now that their masses came forward—one immediately in front, and one on each flank of Marye's Hill—our infantry suddenly rose and poured such rapid volleys into them that the advance was impeded by their own dead. As for our cannon, I can only say that they *could not miss the enemy*, whose fearful and swift destruction was appalling to see. Unheeding the cannonade from across the river, the Washington artillery corps paid exclusive attention to infantry before them, and shells dropped among their masses, making fearful rents at every discharge. The crackling of bursting shells and sharp ring of the rifle were incessant—a flank fire assailed them from our extreme left, so that regiments never advanced farther than to the base of our position; and as they halted, and staggered or swayed, and broke, our men, from breastworks and rifle-pits, and from every imaginable place, were pouring into their bleeding masses showers of small shot.

Again and again were the enemy re-formed, and advance succeeded advance as fresh regiments rushed over heaps of slain, to be themselves torn in an instant into mangled and bleeding shreds. The position was unassailable—a sheet of flame streamed across our whole front, and destroyed everything mortal that approached it. Some of the Federal regiments marched farther than others, and even ascended the “rise,” but here infantry uprose and checked them, and again would the enemy pause, feebly struggle, and reel back into the valley exhausted and bleeding. The sight was horrible. It was not a scientific battle, but a wholesale slaughter

of human beings for the caprice of one man, who, two miles across the river, sat upon the heights, glass in hand, complacently viewing the awful panorama below.\*

But if the enemy had mercilessly sacrificed life in their insane attempt to storm Marye's Hill, they had been extremely busy, likewise, before other parts of our position. It was conceived possible to flank the enceinte by moving up the open grounds of the Hazel Creek, and sever our right and left. A large body was soon espied moving up to the stone wall which protected that position, and were unmolested in their advance, for Cobb carefully screened his men, and although the Federal batteries covered this movement their shot and shell did trifling damage; nor did our pieces on Marye's Hill, Lee's Hill, or Hill's position south of the railroad, give any token of resistance. The Federal advance therefore was quickly accomplished; but when the enemy came sufficiently near, our troops rose up from their ambuscade, and batteries acting in concert, poured such terrific volleys upon them from front and flanks that they retreated in amazement and confusion. Like the attacks on our left, on Marye's Hill, and elsewhere, they repeatedly re-formed and attempted other advances; but the delivery of our rifle and artillery fire was so cool, regular, and destructive, that they gave up the assault in despair. Nothing could surpass

---

\* Northern accounts stated that Burnside sat on the heights round the "Phillip's House," and attentively scanned the whole field with a "strong glass." They also added, judging from the fearful slaughter, that the "strong glass" alluded to was "possibly one of double extra whisky!"

the consummate steadiness of our troops in face of these successive attacks. Not more than one-third were in actual line of battle, for the rest were drawn up to the rear ready to be sent in any direction required; but what few were in front looked upon the affair as virtually settled, and went to work as indifferently as butchers engaged for a busy day's work in the shambles. Ambrose Hill's position was also assaulted early in the day, and report said that some of his young troops had given way; but the gap thus occasioned in his line was soon filled up. The enemy, who had obtained a footing in woods to his front, were driven thence with such fury that the entire Federal line from left to right was forced into the valley; and Stuart's, Walker's, and Walton's batteries pelted them with shot and shell from front and flanks without mercy.

The battle thus far had prospered with us; the enemy had frequently paused and then attacked again, but the mounds of dead on every hill-side, and numerous black and motionless spots which dotted all our front, even to the streets of Fredericksburg, gave sickening evidence of their fearful loss and blind insanity. It was now far past noon, and the sun was fast sinking in the west; our generals were restless and active as ever; cannon still belched forth from either side, but from the long pause and re-formation going on among the dark lines below, it was conjectured they would not desist from their mad project until another grand assault had been attempted. Their force was still formidable in appearance, but evidently dispirited.

and the continual and rapid movements of mounted officers in all directions, gave evidence of their industry and anxiety to restore discipline, confidence, and courage.

Long lines of stretcher-bearers, thus early in the day, were slowly winding in sorrowful procession in all directions, while a multitude of ambulances, with yellow flags flying, could be discerned winding over the hills beyond the river. The town seemed crowded with troops, for we could occasionally catch glimpses of them as their bayonets flashed in the many streets, and from church steeples, house-tops, and on the Stafford Heights, their signal corps was busy in telegraphing orders from point to point. Lee, Longstreet, and Jackson, had been in frequent conference during the day; but the illustrious heroes appeared so calm, indifferent, and smiling, that as they slowly walked their horses from point to point, receiving messages or giving orders, it was clear they were confident of a successful issue to our laborious day's work of slaughter.

When the first gun had opened in the morning, Lee slowly trotted along our whole front, and took up his position on the extreme right of our lines, where Stuart and his horse artillery were making sad havoc with Franklin's left flank. It was imagined by all that the enemy would deliver a grand assault upon Jackson's position, and endeavour to penetrate or sever it along the roads which lead around and through it at several points; but when Lee observed the feebleness of their attack in that quarter, and how easily they were driven

pell-mell into the valley again, he retraced his steps and took his stand in full view of Marye's Hill. On Lee's Hill were several very large guns, recently made at Richmond, which maintained a furious roar all day, and seemed to be a favourite mark for the foe, who, from their elevation on Stafford Heights, threw over hundreds of complimentary shell, but without doing more damage than blowing up vast heaps of earth. It cannot be denied, however, that Federal artillerymen maintained an accurate and steady fire upon our whole front, but the troops exposed were so few that little damage was done to life or limb. *Their* pieces were directed at a few sharpshooters behind earth embankments, *ours* were pointed at dense masses of men; hence it was that not one out of ten shells ever inflicted damage upon us; but every fragment of our grape made a rent in their attacking columns, and left its monument of bleeding carcasses.

"Their practice is good," said a distinguished artillery officer, viewing shells fall and explode a few feet below him round the base of Marye's Hill, and among our line of busy sharpshooters.

"Yes, it is excellent," was the rejoinder from an old brigadier, who, with slouched felt hat and cigar, was gazing on the scene below with much interest. "It is well, colonel," he added, "that Lee has kept two-thirds of his troops from the front, or we should lose considerably. How many pieces have they, think you, on the heights?"

"I have been narrowly scrutinizing their force all day, general, and imagine they have considerably more

than 100,000 men before us, and over 300 guns. I should judge that 100 of the latter are on the heights, and certainly many of them are of heavy calibre."

One or two shells thrown with great rapidity and precision fell within a few feet of these officers, who took the hint and moved away. I learned that the infantry attack on Hill's and Cobb's positions had been very severe, and was desperately maintained by both sides for some time, but except the fall of Gen. Maxey Gregg,\* who was shot in the side and spine while leading on his brave South-Carolinians, I had not heard of any casualties among our officers. In truth our loss along the whole line was remarkably small, and amazed many who could not conceive it possible that so many shot and shell had been hurled at us, and with such little effect.

The troops we had seen all day in the town now advanced into the valley and deployed. Every preparation was seemingly perfected for a general and final advance. Skirmishers fell back and rallied on their regiments; artillery opened again upon their columns from every direction, and numerous well-served Federal batteries returned our fire with a deafening roar. Dust and shells were flying in all directions, but on came that glittering mass of bayonets, extending for miles in front, and again they assailed our position with spirit and determination; but melting ranks and confusion, indecision and exhaustion, were more than men could bear,

---

\* This officer, when wounded, said, "Tell the Governor (of his native State), if I am to die this time, I cheerfully yield my life for the independence of South Carolina!"

and again they slowly retired to the river's edge, broken, dispirited, and beaten.

This seemed to be their last attempt, and, except a continual cannonade, all operations ceased. The sun had dipped beyond the hills, and a thick white vapoury fog slowly fell along the whole river, screening their force and movements from view; but to guard against all surprise pickets and sharpshooters were thickly posted in the valley, which now became more cloudy and obscure, so that, except to the immediate front of Marye's Hill, no movement of the enemy could be well discovered. Trickery was expected, and strict guard maintained at all points. Since the artillery ceased, nothing could be heard except the groans of unhappy, mangled, wounded, and dying thousands, who lay in unsightly groups all round our various positions and at the base of the hills. An alarm was soon given of the enemy's approach, and our whole line was again on the alert, when rapid firing broke out at the right base of Marye's Hill, which Cobb had so well defended from behind the stone fence. It appeared that a heavy body of the enemy had quietly ascended up the banks of the Hazel under cover of the evening, and thought to seize that position, thus getting into the rear of Marye's Hill; but they were received so coolly, and with such a destructive fire, that they retreated with the utmost expedition and in the greatest confusion.

Thus the slaughter at Fredericksburg closed. Sumner, Hooker, Wilcox, Meagher, French, and a host of other leaders, had been routed on our centre and left—Franklin, Meade, Jackson, Bayard, and Stoneman, had

met with a fearful repulse on the right: for miles their dead and wounded lined the front of our works, and were scattered up and down the valley in great profusion; but even nature seemed shocked at such frightful carnage, and mercifully threw a veil of fog and darkness over the crimsoned valley.

Cold and bitter as was that bleak December night—cheerless and sad to thousands in the valley, whose oozing wounds were frosted and frozen, few went forth to assist them, save from our own lines; and there those frightful masses lay huddled together, the dying with the dead; some jerking in the last throes of death, others gasping for water, writhing with agony, laughing deliriously, cursing demoniacally in all the tongues of Europe. Save for the quick, sharp challenge of vigilant pickets posted in the valley, the lightsome footfalls of relief guards, gliding like shadows through the mists in their journeys to the front, the moans ascending on every hand, and the click of spades in the hands of those strengthening breastworks, all had subsided into a deathlike calm. None unaccustomed to war would imagine that so many thousands of men were grouped closely together in the valley or on the hills ready to renew the awful scenes just enacted. Exhausted and unstrung, our men were fast asleep, and many of them far to the front among the dead and dying; yet let me not deny that, wearied though we were, the distant moan or faltering supplication often caused us to rise and give relief to some expiring enemy. Most of our own men had been cared for, and taken to the rear, but heaps upon heaps of the foe were scattered in every



direction, and one could not move a dozen yards without stumbling against<sup>1</sup> some voiceless, inanimate carcase, or slipping in pools of blood or scattered entrails.

Such is war—"glorious" war—glorious indeed when troops had fought as ours had done for liberty and birthright, but in every other sense the most horrible and lamentable curse that God could permit His people to inflict on each other!

Morning dawned, the mists arose, and still the enemy were there. No token gave indications of a further advance. The whole day passed without a movement of any kind, and no disposition seemed to be made for the care of the enemy's dead or wounded. In pure compassion for the heartrending spectacle before us, many of the sufferers were collected and attended to by our surgeons, but as none knew at what moment hostilities might again re-commence, we could not enter heartily into the work of charity. Many of our men were never allowed to be exposed in front, and the few on duty there were for the most part employed in repairing old or building new breastworks.

Next day passed as the former one, and still no signs of the enemy's coming. Their lines were apparently in excellent order, and the Stafford Heights frowned ominously with additional batteries; so that had we advanced into the valley a fearful cannonade would have assailed us. In the evening, we all imagined that the morning would surely usher in a decisive engagement, whether offensive or defensive on our part; but during night a fearful storm arose, so that we could neither hear nor see our own patrols, and as morning

advanced, and the valley cleared, we discovered that the whole Federal army had escaped under cover of night, and were safely on the north bank again.

When the enemy's retreat became known to our army, loud yells rent the sky, and must have been plainly audible to Burnside's forces across the river ; but whether these were indicative of rage or pleasure at the retreat I cannot imagine, but fancy they arose from a commixture of both those feelings. It soon became known that a convention had been entered into for the burial of dead, and the valley swarmed with our troops, who were speedily engaged in the work of interment; but when I visited the town, and beheld the sad havoc done there by the Vandals, I almost felt sorry to think I had ever given a cup of water to their wounded and dying. Every house was gutted and robbed ; furniture, bedding, and household goods of every kind were maliciously broken and scattered through the streets ; doors, windows, banks, churches, school-houses, all were destroyed or despoiled, while in every dwelling, amid pools of blood, were laid their dead and dying, whose pallid faces, staring eyes, gaping wounds, and frigid limbs, twisted into frightful distortions, met the Southern soldier at every turn in this once pleasant and hospitable town, so wilfully destroyed. The bombardment had done great mischief : houses were tottering to their foundations, and everywhere gave proof of the passage of shell and bullet among smouldering ruins ; but it remained for these valiant invaders to give a finishing touch to their barbarism by despoiling and desecrating churches, accumulating filth in the holiest of places, wantonly

destroying all that came to hand, and then leaving their dead and wounded to the care of those whose residence or property it once had been.

I have read of Goths and Vandals, of Huns and Danes, but never could I have conceived of a boastful enemy, laying claims to the highest civilization, capable of exhibiting such low caste on the battle-field, or so much petty malice among an unoffending people, as these same hordes of hypocritical Yankees, whom it has been my fortune to meet in a short but exciting military career from Bull Run to Fredericksburg.\*

---

\* The Confederate force at Fredericksburg has been estimated at 80,000, with 300 guns, of all calibres. Our total casualties amounted to 2,000 or 2,500. Among the killed were General Maxey Gregg, of South Carolina; and among the wounded, Generals Hood, Cobb, and Jenkins.

Burnside's forces, according to Washington reports, amounted to 140,000 or 150,000 men with 300 guns. It was paraded at the North, before the slaughter, that Burnside commanded the finest army ever raised, and that it included all the "regulars" and "veterans" of the service, who had been expressly gathered in order to insure success. Their total loss in killed, wounded, and missing, has been placed at from 15,000 to 20,000 by Northern journals of respectability. Among their killed were General Bayard, chief of cavalry, and General Jackson. Among the wounded:—General Stoneman, General Vinton, General Gibbons, General Caldwell, General Meagher, General Kimball, and others. This defeat and slaughter sent such a thrill of horror through all classes at the North, that official inquiry was demanded, when it appeared that General Sumner, of the right wing, General Franklin, of the left, and General Hooker, of the centre, had decided against the movement in a council of war, but that Burnside did not heed their advice, but resolved on crossing: thinking that through feints made lower down the river he had deceived Lee as to his true designs, and that troops being sent in that direction, the Confederate left and centre would be weak to any large assaulting force. The committee of inquiry sent from Washington greatly underrated the Federal losses. They say in their report that "they are well pleased with what they saw, and regard the result as infinitely less serious than was previously appre

hended. It appears now that the total casualties will hardly exceed 10,000. Of these about 1,000 were killed; some 1,700 were so badly wounded that two-thirds of them will die of their wounds, and the rest will be permanently disabled. Of the others, the wounds are more or less serious; but a majority are expected to recover and be again fit for duty. It has been ascertained that about 81 per cent. of the wounds were occasioned by Minié balls, 15½ per cent. by shells, and 3½ per cent. by round shot." Such was the destruction of human life, that Federal accounts mention whole divisions which could muster but a few hundreds after the battle. Some regiments were decimated, and others had not more than a company left to answer roll-call! Although they had fitting opportunities to bury part of their dead subsequent to the battle, that unpleasant office was left to us, for the most part; and to deceive us as to their retreat, they propped up dead bodies to counterfeit sentinels, in many places, with placards fastened to them, ridiculing and cursing the "rebels" who buried them. This was very decent and valiant conduct certainly, and is worthy of record.

THE END.

LONDON :  
PRINTED BY SMITH, ELDER AND CO.,  
LITTLE GREEN ARBOUR COURT, OLD BAILEY, E.C.













